Discourses On Patience

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Discourses On Patience (Guftari der Barai Sabr) Lectures of Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamene'iThis text analyzes the topic of patience in light of traditions, Islamic code, and history while shedding light on the advantages and effects of patience.

Preface

One of the most brilliant, gifted and worthy sons of Islam of our age -- a great scholar, thinker, philosopher, jurisprudent, writer of great erudition and penetration, the defender of the honour of Islam during the deposed Pahlavi regime, and the best pupil and the outcome of the entire life of Imam Khomeini (may his soul rest in peace) - Ayatollah Shaikh Murtaza Mutahhari (who was martyred on May ۱, ۱۹۷۹ by the Terrorist Furqan group in Tehran) had said regarding the need of publishing suitable Islamic literature as follows:

We are the responsible people; we have not produced sufficient literature in various" aspects of Islam in current languages. Had we, therefore, made available the pure and sweet waters in abundance, people would not have contented themselves with polluted waters."(۱)

Keeping the above in mind, I have tried to translate the present book, Discourse on Patience (Guftari dar bab-e-sabr) by Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamene'i from Persian

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۱- Islamic Movements in Twentieth Century by Ayatollah Motahhari.

into English, as my insignificant contribution to produce a tiny drop of pure and sweet .water

In order to defend the Islamic Community against the cultural onslaught of the enemies of Islam, and in order to achieve political and cultural unity for them, there is a critical need to design a coat of arms prepared by suitable Islamic literature, so that Muslims can equip themselves and their children with this armour of Islamic culture. :As the writer of this book Ayatollah Khamene'i has stated

An indifferent, unaware believer could be compared to a soldier in the battlefield," who is fighting naked without wearing armour. Such an ill-equipped soldier is most .likely to be killed or disappear from the scene during the very first encounter

But an aware, conscientious, and knowledgeable Muslim with Islamic ideology could be compared to a soldier, who is fully clad in armour from head to foot and is fully equipped with all the required armaments. Obviously, for the enemy to defeat such a (well-equipped soldier is a relatively difficult task."(١

The war between total belief and total blasphemy is going on fiercely on all fronts namely; militarily, economically and culturally. The most severe among the three is the cultural onslaught being waged by the enemies. This cultural battle is most crucial, because once people are deprived of their ideology and culture, then the enemy becomes victorious without firing a single bullet and without waging a single military .operation

The Islamic "Andalusia" (modern Spain), was snatched away from the Muslims by using

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١- Discourse on Patience by Ayatollah Khamene'i.

this tactic. We must wake up before history repeats itself. The enemy has already intruded within the privacy of the four walls of our dwellings. Even the so-called cartoon video films for children and the paper wrappings inside chewing gum packages are not immune, and intermingled with their satanic sexual onslaught, .without mentioning the other horrible means at their disposal

We Muslims are quite well aware of the power and richness of our ideology. Even our enemies are fully aware of its revolutionary dynamic force. In a famous sermon in his book Path of Eloquence (Nahj-ul-Balagha), the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali :(a.s.) speaks about this ideology as follows

Have you fully realised what Islam is? It is a religion founded on truth. It is such a" fountainhead of learning that from it flow out several streams of wisdom and knowledge. It is such a lamp that from it several lamps will be lighted. It is a tall beacon lighting the path to Allah. It is a set of principles and beliefs which will satisfy .every seeker of truth and reality

Know you all that Allah has made Islam the most sublime path towards His Supreme Pleasure and the highest standard of His Worship and Obedience. He has favoured it with noble precepts, exalted principles, undoubtable arguments, unchallengeable .supremacy and undeniable wisdom

It is up to you to maintain the eminence and dignity granted to it by the Lord, to follow ,it sincerely, to do justice to its articles of faith and belief

(to implicitly obey its tenets and orders, and to give it the proper place in your lives."(۱

Well, we have in our possession such a rich ideology, the Holy Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (may the peace of Allah be upon him and his progeny), but it is just a matter of its implementation in our daily lives and its execution in Islamic countries. Sometimes it happens that a society possesses theoretical knowledge and ingeniousness, but nevertheless the circumstances are such that its practical .application is not possible

Fortunately, with the victory of the Islamic Revolution on February ۱۱, ۱۹۷۹ (Bahman ۲۲, ۱۳۵۸), under the enlightened leadership of that divine iron-willed man blessed with foresight, whose very name and whose very word inspire the hearts of Muslims, the idol-breaker, the holder of the highest esteem, the dearest of the sons of Islam and a rare, gifted genius, Imam Ayatollah ul-Uzma Ruhullah al-Musavi Khomeini (may his .soul rest in peace), the task of the implementation of this ideology was accomplished

So far the Islamic Flag stating "There is no god but Allah" is flying high over the skies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it awakens the giant one-billion-strong Islamic Community, pumping fresh blood into their veins and arteries. The existence of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the present situation could be compared to the motor of an automobile, which is currently providing the required energy for the motion of the .Islamic World

In this regard, I would like to share with

.(Sermon of Imam Ali (a.s.) Path of Eloquence (Nahj-ul-Balagha Sermon No. ۲۰۳ -۱

the readers the reflections of Nouruddin Shireen, a Turkish writer whose interview was published recently in the Turkish newspaper "ALAMDAR", upon his return from a recent trip to the devastated, oppressed and aggressed Islamic country of Bosnia-:Herzegovina. He writes as follows

As far as helping Bosnia by other governments was concerned, there was only one" single government and that was the Islamic Republic of Iran. In principle, it should be mentioned that the goal of Imam Khomeini and his holy struggle was to free all Muslims and to accomplish freedom and independence for the entire Islamic Community. He stood for the defence of oppressed Muslims all over the world. Till the Islamic Republic of Iran exists (Insha'Allah), the Muslims of the world will never .remain without defence and support

Praise to Allah, that today one leader -with honour and dignity is following the holy path of Imam Khomeini. May Allah prolong the shadow of this leader upon the heads of Muslims of the world. The existence of Ayatollah Khamene'i is a ray of hope and Messing for all Muslims throughout the world. I witnessed this reality in Bosnia with my own eyes. Every time I encountered the picture of Imam Khomeini at some homes and shops, the intense emotion and love shown by the Bosnian Muslim people for Imam was something comparable to children who have been separated from their (father."(١)

Unfortunately, pains and tragedies have befallen the Islamic Community, which if they had fallen on a bright day, would have turned it

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.Islami P. ۱۳ - Jan ۲۹, ۱۹۹۴ -۱

into a dark night. There is Palestine, where, day and night we see how Zionist soldiers are hunting bare-handed and helpless children, and how insolently under the very eyes of television cameras are breaking their bones inside the torture chambers in Zionist prisons. On February ۲۵ of this year, we saw the most cold-blooded butchering and wounding of hundreds of innocent, fasting Muslims while in the state of prostration, offering their Friday prayer during the holy month of Ramadhan, inside the Shrine of Prophet Abraham (S) in the city of al-Khalil committed by savage .Zionists

There is Islamic Algeria, where democracy was beheaded in broad daylight while the whole civilised world watched. The land of Jame' al-Azhar or Egypt, where, every day Muslims are being sentenced to death for just being Muslims, and for demanding an .Islamic Government

There is also Bosnia, where the most savage and horrible systematic genocide is being carried out for more than three years in so-called civilised and modern Europe, showing the impotence of International Organisations in this regard. Barbaric acts such as forcing a Muslim Imam of a mosque to drink the blood of his son, the live burial of a young man while his would-be bride watches, the chemical bombing of the besieged city of Gorazde and the killing of thousands of its defenceless Muslim defenders, and the numerous shameful deeds of raping women and young girls, and crimes which were not committed by even the most notorious of the Nazis in .Germany

The modern and

civilised world cries for the rights of dogs, cats, fish, bears, and other animals all over the world, but for crimes committed against Muslims, there is no crying, no tears, and no rights are considered to have been violated. Nevertheless, this present state of the world awakens and tests Muslims. The sun of hope is slowly rising on the Islamic World, and there is absolutely no doubt that if we could become united and preserve our steadfastness, the future belongs to Islam. We, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, sincerely aspire for unity and our hearts bleed for all of our brothers and sisters as the Prophet (may peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said:

"Truly the believers in their acts of co-operation and mutual aid are like the head to the body; should it complain, the rest of the body rallies to it in vigilant defence."(۱)

This philosophy had been elegantly described by the late Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmoud Taleqani, in his sermon, on the occasion of first "Qods Day" on August ۱۷, ۱۹۷۹ (Ramadhan ۲۳, ۱۳۹۹) in Tehran, as follows:

"All Muslims, wherever they may be, in their co-operative relationships with each other, their acts of compassion toward each other are like the head to a body when it feels pain and complains. Whenever a member of the human body feels pain, its complaint is brought to the command centres by means of the nerves, afterwards to reach the other members. This afflicted member becomes like the head; all thought

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۱- Society and Economics in Islam by Ayatollah Taleqani.

.and attention, one's eyes and ears, attend it until it is taken care of

Why? Because if it is not taken care of, all the members will become paralysed. The Muslims of the world must know that they are all members of a single body; they must not suppose that by remaining indifferent to the lot of other Muslims they can (preserve themselves from the painful calamities that are besetting them."(١

This translation coincides with the tragic news of the chemical bombing of the besieged city of Gorazde in Bosnia-Herzagovina and the heroic defence and resistance offered by its defenders, despite the unmanly withdrawal of the so-called .peace-keeping forces of the United Nations

I dedicate this translation work to the lofty spirits of the Martyrs of this besieged city. As far as the brave and heroic Muslim defenders of Bosnia-Herzegovina and all oppressed Muslims throughout the Islamic world are concerned, ١ give them the glad tidings that victory is near (Insha'Allah), and ١ invite their attention to the following :(.sermon of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (a.s

When Allah witnessed their patience in resisting the tortures and hardships, which" were inflicted upon them, because of their love for Him and following the path of truth. He opened over them gates of divine assistance in the midst of those difficult bottlenecks of misfortunes. The deprived of yesterday, after that found themselves as rulers and governors. Their glory, fame, prestige, reached to a point, which had never been imagined by them in their best

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.Ibid -١

(of dreams."(1)

Further, Allah has clearly reminded us that Islam is the greatest source of power and it can do wonders, that the power of faith is far mightier than that of the superpowers. There is a saying of Imam Khomeini: "It is our duty to struggle in this fashion, and the result is with Allah". In the words of the Holy Qur'an, Allah has promised us the result :as follows

Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion -- the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they .(lived), to one of security and peace

They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me. If any do reject faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked. So establish regular prayer and give regular charity; and obey the apostle; that ye may receive mercy. Never think thou that the unbelievers are going to frustrate (Allah's plan) on earth: their abode is the Fire, -- and .(it is indeed an evil refuge!' (The Holy Qur'an , ۲۴: ۵۵-۵۷

I have tried to be loyal to the Persian text to the best of my ability. The notes added by the translator have been indicated by (Tr.) and those by the editor by (Ed.). I am sincerely

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.(Sermon of Imam Ali (a.s.) Path of Eloquence (Nahj-ul-Balagha Sermon No. ۲۳۴ -۱

indebted to Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini, the learned scholar and jurisprudent from the Religious Learning Centre of Qum for his kind guidance and encouragement. I offer my sincere appreciation to Dr. Ali Naqi Baqershahi, for his encouragement and providing the Biography of Ayatollah Khamene'i, Sayyid Ali Shahbaz for Editing, and Hojjat-ul-Islam Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Hakim and Mrs. Saddigheh (Debra Ann) Bush, for proof reading. I am also indebted to my wife Fatima Razavi and children for being patient with me while completing this work during the New Year vacation. Sincere thanks are also due to Mr. Ansariyan for his encouragement for publishing this book. Also, I wish to thank all of my friends at Iran Water and Power Development Company who have contributed to the realisation of this translation, especially Mr. Reza Hadadian, Mr. Asghar Mesmarian and Mr. Ali Reza Nouri. I apologise to my readers for .possible errors, and omissions and welcome their suggestions and comments

Sayyid Hussein Alamdar

April ۱۳, ۱۹۹۴

Ziqadeh ۱۴۱۴ ۱

Tehran

Chapter۱: Discourse on Patience

point

Patience is considered to be one of the best-known terms in Islam. In Islamic literature, this phrase occurs with frequency in proportion to different occasions and in various fields, with a tone of encouragement, discussion of rewards, and praise and explanation about its importance. It is therefore natural that Muslims become familiar with its meaning, understand this special phrase, and try to breed this quality within .themselves to the best of their ability

Unfortunately, alteration or tampering, which is a very common calamity especially for Islamic phrases, has

not left this term untouched, and it could be said that up to a large extent its form, .matter, and substance have been completely metamorphosed

Common Understanding of Patience

Normally, patience is defined as tolerant of unpleasant circumstances. This definition, the way it is to a larger extent is intermingled with ambiguities, justifications, opposing statements, and conflicts. For an oppressed and vacuous society steeped in corruption and decadence, patience as defined above will become the biggest tool and pattern for oppressors and corrupters for maintaining the status quo, by keeping .the society in a state of backwardness

When poor and backward nations exposed to all kinds of problems and misery, or oppressed masses crushed under brute oppression, or societies faced with moral corruption, poverty and human suffering, or any individual or group trapped in a cesspool of misfortune and calamities are told to be patient, the first result will be the taking of that bitter and fatal dose, i.e. to suffer with, and not to overthrow the .existing state of oppression

Not only will they not mobilize themselves to overthrow the existing undesirable state of oppression, but on the contrary, keeping in mind the supposed rewards for remaining indifferent and naive they would feel happy and content to the extent that they would regard such behaviour as tantamount to accomplishment of a grand victory. It is obvious that the prevalence of such a mentality in that society, up to a large extent, will be to the advantage of the class of exploiters and oppressors, and to the

.further detriment of the deprived and oppressed masses

Unfortunately, this wrong interpretation together with its disastrous results presently constitutes the sorry state of affairs in Islamic societies. Any other interpretation for free and unprejudiced minds is quite logical and acceptable. But for those accustomed to its false interpretation, even serious endeavours and fruitful results. When detailed studies of verses of the Holy Qur'an and narrations (hadith) about patience are .conducted, grief and surprise for this deviation becomes relatively intense

Overall Views About Patience

If the meanings of patience are interpreted in the light of the clear, explicit, and definite verses of the Holy Qur'an as well as in accordance with the authentic traditions reported from the infallible Imams (may peace be upon them), then the result derived would be completely opposite to the current common understanding of .the term

The above interpretation transforms patience into a lever capable of removing with ease, the heaviest obstacles and solving the biggest problems with one hundred percent positive results. Thus, for an unfortunate society, patience is the key to prosperity and blessings, while on the other hand it will be a strong obstacle to be .reckoned with for troublemakers and mischief mongers

In order to appreciate exactly the true meanings of patience and its relevant fields, the best methodology is to resort to the Holy Qur'an and authentic traditions. A thorough investigation would enable us to reach a clear and decisive judgement. More than seventy verses of the Holy Qur'an, deal with patience, glorifying the term and praising those who possess

this virtue. The Holy Qur'an describes in detail possess this virtue. The Holy Qur'an describes in detail the relevant results derived, and the circumstances where one .could count on this characteristic

For the present discussion, we will not resort to the verses of the Holy Qur'an regarding patience, rather it will suffice our discussion to review the authentic traditions, and accordingly, derive inferences and conclusions because of the .following reasons

Firstly, precise and detailed interpretation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an regarding patience would mean a wide discussion, which requires a lot of patience, energy and (time.(١

Secondly, to try to compensate for the negligence shown towards the traditions which were narrated by the infallible Imams (may peace be upon them), our discussion will be based on traditions. The absence of the use of traditions is clearly felt in current .Islamic research and currently published Islamic literature

Summary of the Meanings of Patience

On the basis of traditions, patience is defined as the resistance shown by man on the road towards perfection against mischief, corruption and degradation. Which can be compared to the example of a mountaineer who, in order to reach the peak, has to .face internal as well as external obstacles or barriers

The internal obstacles are within his inner self, while the external ones are outside beyond his control. Each of them in their own ways interfere with his climbing efforts. Internal obstacles such as the love for comfort, as well as fear, despair, and different types of similar passions, try to stop

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A point in contrast to those who have totally disregarded the Holy Qur'an for – ١ understanding the principles and branches of Islam, and depend upon traditions, however weak, as the only source of religion

him while the feeling of indecisiveness in many forms tries to kill his determination for climbing. On the other hand, external barriers such as stones, rocks, wolves, thieves, .and thorns etc. retard his progress

Someone who is faced with these kinds of barriers will have the options to either drop his journey on this road which is full of dangers and hardships, or to go ahead by offering resistance against them and overcoming each barrier with his power of .determination. The second case is defined as patience

During his limited span of life in this world, the human being between his birth and death is a traveller on the road towards the final destination. He has been fundamentally created to endeavour as much as possible to bring himself close to the final destination. All the duties and responsibilities which have been assigned to man's shoulders are the necessary means and ways to bring him closer to that target. The primary aim of the divine religions and the great prophets was to build an Islamic society providing a suitable field in which human beings could travel, ultimately .reaching their desired goal

In a nutshell, that aim could be defined as the striving for perfection and exaltation of human beings. In other words, it is the opening of the fountainheads of talents of his inner self. His acquiring of superior and noble characteristics overrides animalistic .characteristics or lower qualities

Of course, this path is a difficult one full of troubles and plenty of barriers. Each of

these barriers alone is sufficient to deter the climber from continuing his journey towards the peak of perfection and exaltedness. The inner negative forces (inside the climber) of unweighed evil passions, coupled with the external forces such as the troublesome state of affairs of the real world, produce a series of obstacles of thorns, .rocks, etc., in his path

Patience means to be able to stand up against all those obstacles and to conquer them with determination and enthusiasm. Therefore, as was mentioned earlier, all Islamic duties whether individual or collective (social) are means and steps needed to .approach that goal of perfection

For a person on a journey towards a distant City travelling through the deserts, the passing of each habitation that lies in his path means that his journey is progressing or, he is getting closer to his final destination. Of course these intermediate aims or targets themselves are preliminaries of the path towards reaching the real and final destination. Therefore each step taken, although a means for accomplishing the ultimate aim, is nevertheless in itself a multidimensional accomplishment and may be .regarded as something closer to the final objective

The summary of this discussion is that to reach each of these goals and destinations, the basic condition is the possession of patience and the ability to utilise this sharp and decisive weapon. Just as the road towards the accomplishment of the ultimate goal of perfection is full of obstacles, similarly the paths of Muslims fulfilling their Islamic duties and responsibilities

are also full of these obstacles. These paths are a means for reaching the final .destination

There are infinite internal and external obstacles scattered on these roads. On one hand, the depressing internal feelings of laziness, indifference, selfishness, self-praise, pride, greed, and improper sexual desires, as well as other various harmful desires of comfort, wealth, fame, etc., haunt the traveller. While on the other hand, unfavourable conditions, interruptions, and situations forced or superimposed onto .people because of the social set up of ruling regimes confront him

Each one of the above in a way, discourages him from carrying out his constructive duties, which either could be individual duties such as offering prayers, or other social obligations like his efforts for the proclamation of truth. The thing which would enable and guarantee the dischargement of each duty, the undertaking of each step, the proceeding on each road, and the accomplishing of each result, is the resistance offered by man against obstacles. Thus the power which enables him to proceed .through these barriers, is defined as patience

Chapter ۲: Importance of Patience in the Light of Traditions

point

According to a few traditions selected from a collection of traditions describing the importance of patience in Islam and other divine religions, it may be summarised that patience has been recommended by all the divine prophets and righteous leaders to .their successors and followers

Let us consider the example of a kind father or a compassionate teacher who has spent a life full of efforts and resistance, and suffered pains, tortures, and deprivations for the sake

of his goals. At the last moments of his life, all the struggles which provided the purpose and direction to his life are now nearing an end, and his goals are still cherished. What will be his last advice for his successors, who in his opinion will follow his struggle and will keep the movement alive by taking other giant steps to carry this ?heavy load closer to the final destination

It will be nothing other than the extraction and summary of all the theoretical and practical experiences and possessions acquired by him in his life span. All those things which must be said in his last moments, if he could manage to put them into one sentence, will be like a capsule consisting all the precious accomplishments and practical know-how acquired by him in the form of guidelines designed for a trainee. He will hand this over to his successor and follower, which in reality means transformation of the final designation of his life to the person after him. This mission .being accomplished, he leaves this world after making due preparations

The last parting recommendations of the prophets, the pious, the righteous, the martyrs and the strugglers in the way of Allah for their followers and the builders of the divine society, is to be patient. Their last advice is their recommendation regarding .patience

:Now let us pay our attention to the following two traditions

First Narration

Abu Hamza Thomali, one of the famous and sincere followers of the Prophet's Ahl-ul-Bait and a principal member

of the righteous Shi'ite movement quotes from his leader and teacher, Imam Muhammad AI-Baqer (a.s.), as saying: "When the last moments of his life arrived, my father Ali ibn al-Husayn (a.s.) held me close to his chest and said: My son I, recommend to you what my father (Imam Husayn) recommended to me at the last (Moments of his life. My son stand for truth even if it is bitter".(١)

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) is the vicegerent and successor of his father Ali ibn Husayn Zayn al-Abedin and is the inheritor of the heavy burden of trust, and is responsible for the continuation of the struggle and movement of his father, exactly in the same manner that Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (a.s.) was responsible for the continuation of the movement left by his father Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.), the martyr .of Karbala

Each personality from the household of the holy Prophet was responsible for the continuation of the divine mission of his predecessor, and all of them collectively were upholders of the divine mission of the last Prophet of Allah. All of them are created from a single source of energy (light) and are the seekers of one direction and one .aim

My son I recommend to you what my father recommended me at the last moment of" "...his life

We all know how and where the last moments of the life of Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) were spent. He was in the midst of turmoil on the day of 'Ashura' (١٠th

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١- al-Kafi vol. ٢

of Moharram ۶۱ Hijri -- ۶۸۰ AD.). Pains, torture and tragedy dominated the bloody state of affairs in the plain of Karbala. In spite of the fact that he was completely encircled by his bloodthirsty enemies, Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) took advantage of a short opportunity to go back to his camp before starting his final attack. After having a brief meeting with the members of his household who in their own ways were carriers of his mission, he held a short but sufficient, effective and very important discussion with his vicegerent and successor Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (a.s.).

These kinds of discussions in simple language may be called farewell meetings. But it must be understood that a pious leader (Imam) is far above sentimental passions, and that during the last opportunity of his life, he would only open his lips for personal, private, and sentimental affairs, instead of discussing the most important issues of his mission. Whatever reports which remains regarding the other great pious leaders (Imams) that has reached us, certifies the same thing.(۱)

He knew at that sensitive moment that the heavy burden of the trust for which he had struggled for since the beginning of his leadership had also been endured by the founder of the revolution, the holy Prophet (S), the Commander of Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.), and Imam Hassan (a.s.). All of them had suffered all kinds of pains and were subjected to severe hardships for following that path. The trust would now be handed

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۱- Among the books of traditions, we may observe the wills of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.), Imam Hassan (a.s.), Imam Sadiq (a.s.), and other leaders, which proves the seine point

over to the next person. The powerful arms and steadfast steps of his vice-regent would be assigned the responsibility to carry that burden of trust forward. Therefore he had come to advise him about the most important issues of his mission. What was ?this important and cherished advice

Now Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (a.s.) who found himself more or less under conditions similar to his father's time, explained the key issues to his son and vice-regent, and offered recommendations accordingly. He also emphasised that earlier, his father :(.Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) had been similarly instructed by his father Imam Ali (a.s

"...What his father recommended"

This advice has continuously been emphasised since it was first given by the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) to the next Imam-designate and onward through all the successive Imams by their proceeding Imams. What was that ?recommendation

."The outcome and summation of that advice was „patience

".My son stand for truth even if it is bitter"

My son! Stand for the truth and be patient, even if it is bitter and inconvenient. Or in other words, on the road of truth one should never give up, and should never be frustrated by obstacles. Once you know and recognise the path of truth, you must support it all the way. All hardships, bitterness, failures, and inconveniences should be borne patiently to continue the journey forward. It is obvious that the confrontation of truth and falsehood is full of hardship, bitterness, and inconvenience and one should not expect this path

to be like a bed of roses. All these inconveniences and hardships should be resisted .with patience for the sake of truth

This was the last will of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) given to Imam Hassan (a.s.), and subsequently it was given to all the successive Imams by their predecessors. Also, we have witnessed that the Commander of the Faithful himself, and all of the righteous Imams after him, had actually followed that will. All of them, till the last moment of their lives defended truth accepting all the consequences, even at the cost of their lives (martyrdom). Their lives in practising patience for the pleasure :of Allah, were indeed manifestations of the following Arabic couplet

I practised "patience" in my life to the highest level, whereby even "patience" itself" bears witness that in tolerating things even more bitter than "patience", I remained ".steadfast and patient

Therefore, for the importance of patience it is found, that all the infallible Imams from the Prophet's Ahl-ul-Bait (a.s.) have enjoined this priceless jewel and noble .inheritance in their wills for their successors, at the very last moment of their lives

Second Narration

From Fiqh al-Ridha' (a.s.) We narrate of the wills of the prophets, peace be upon" (them. Be patient for truth, even if it is bitter."(١

Fiqh al-Ridha' is a famous book of jurisprudence attributed to the eighth Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha' (a.s.), a portion of which deals with the legal affairs in Islam. In other .words these issues may be termed as jurisprudence

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١- Bihar al-Anwar

This term partly deals with the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, and traditions but the major portion of the book covers the ways and means and overall issues related to Islamic learning. It is this second part which constitutes the complete and comprehensive portion of the term of jurisprudence. The above mentioned book contains the following meaningful narration(١) which could be interpreted and :expounded as follows

We narrate this important narration, which is the inheritance and memory of our noble family left by our fathers and their ancestors, who left this last will for us, and in :turn we willed it to our successors

The will of all the divine prophets for their vice-regents, inheritors, trustees, flag :carriers of divine movements, and students of the divine school of thought was

".Stand for the truth and be patient, even if it is bitter and inconvenient"

This is exactly the same sentence spoken by the Commander of Faithful, without the least Variation. Perhaps, this short, but meaningful sentence left by the prophets and their vicegerents, could be the best example for showing the importance of patience. Therefore, on the basis of the above two narrations, we may define patience, as the will enjoined by the divine prophets and Imams on their inheritors and disciples. It is quite explicit that this Islamic characteristic has so much weight, importance, and influence, in the complex structure of the divine religion of Islam that all the prophets .had included it in their Testaments

Chapter ٣: Patience in Islamic Codices

Faith may be defined as something

١- Late Muhaddis Nouri, who was a most exalted and learned scholar of his time in his book "Mustadrek al-Wasail" had presented numerous logical convincing arguments, testifying the authenticity of the above issues. Nouri's work is very interesting for the learned scholars in the field of traditions

which consists of ethics, legal rights, and public instructions (learning). The same is the case for any other constructive social school or organisation. We may therefore :classify faith into the following

.I) The basis for understanding of man and the world. This is known as world-view)

II) On the basis of these principles, the overall direction for the movement and) .(human action (ideology

III) Within these boundaries, guidelines or regulations for relationship of man with) .Allah, with self, with fellow human beings, and with other creatures

IV) A series of moral guidelines for maintaining the required necessary momentum or) endeavour for achieving perfection or exaltedness, and accomplishing success in .various fields of life

Of course, this vast complex, includes personal matters related to the personal interests of individuals, as well as social matters pertaining to various large groups of humanity, and affairs concerning these groups and the Islamic community (Ummah). Let us see in the above complex of faith, what is the influence and roll played by :patience. In other words, a person committed to religion will act as follows

.I) He must believe in religious principles)

.II) He must obey the religious regulations)

.III) He must be familiar with the special clauses dealing with ethics)

If one fulfils all the above three, in his conduct, one could rightly be called a true believer. We will now examine the role played by patience in the life of a believer in .following religion in the true sense

In a geometrical figure which consists of lines and angles, each point, arc and

semi-circle creates a special effect. Let us see what influence and role is played by patience in the geometrical figure representing the faith of a true believer. Let us consider the example of an automobile which is supposed to move someone together with his household belongings to a certain location. After passing through various .streets, this automobile finally reaches the desired final destination

What is responsible for moving this automobile? Is it the engine? What thing is responsible for providing this strength or power to the engine? Of course, it is the petrol. Therefore in the life of a believer, patience may be compared to the engine or .the petrol which gives life and strength to that engine

Without patience, the truth and steadfast logic of the exalted school of religion would not have been understood. The divine learning (revelations) of this school which blessed humanity would have lost its colour with the passage of time. The ultimate hope of victory of truth over falsehood, which provides fresh life-giving blood for powerful hands and steadfast steps of believers, would have been silenced. And the laws and guidelines of religion which control and check the human tendencies of .transgression would have become inactive

The heroic field of valour and martyrdom for the sake of Allah and religion would have been converted into a graveyards of ideologies. The international congress of Hajj would have remained empty. The humming, sensational and confidential communications of the burning lovers (believers) in the middle of night, with the Beloved

Allah) would have been silenced, the beautiful scene of "Jihad-e-Akbar" with the self) ("great self-struggle"), namely fasting and self-restriction would have lost its charms. The arteries of the economy of the Islamic state would have dried up, and charity and .alms-giving for the pleasure of Allah would have been ignored

Without patience all the higher educational and ethical values of Islam (piety, trust, and righteousness) would have been forgotten; and in essence, each parameter of religion which requires action and efforts, would have remained deprived of them. Because religion requires practice, which is not possible without patience. Therefore what provides life-giving fresh blood to this giant complex, or what provides motion to this train is nothing else but patience. With the above discussion, the substance and .meaning of this divine inspiration could be clearly understood

According to some documented narrations related to the infallible Imams, the :importance of patience has been defined as follows

".Patience out of faith is like a head to a body"

The head of a person holds the most critical importance as far as life is concerned. One may tolerate the absence of different parts in the human body such as hands, feet, eyes, ears etc. But if the head which is the controlling room for the whole nervous system, does not exist or is crippled, then all the parts and systems of the body will become crippled. The body may remain alive, but in reality it will not be .different than a dead body

Sometimes, it may be that

a part of the body may perform an outstanding task. May be the fist, a powerful hand, fingers, or the eyes of a person might conduct excellent performance in discharging many duties, but all that is accomplished is because of the presence of the head. .Patience holds similar importance in the structure of religion

Without patience the existence of Monotheism (Tawheed) will not be possible either. The prophethood and the prophetic mission would not have produced any fruits. The rights of the deprived people could not have been obtained from the tyrants. Prayers, .fasting, and other rituals would also have been meaningless

Therefore it is patience which fulfils all the aspirations of religion and humanity. If at the very beginning of Islam, if the Prophet (S) would have not offered resistance against all that severe opposition, for the sake of truth, of course, the slogan "there is no god but Allah" would have been suffocated within the boundary walls of his home, .at its very inception

What kept Islam alive and intact was patience. If the pious people of Allah and great divine prophets would have not been patient against opposition and obstacles in their path, today there would have not been left any trace and influence of monotheism. The single factor responsible for keeping alive the system of monotheism, since the very beginning of human creation has been patience. Which has been the flag carrier for this heavenly ideology till today, and will continue to do the same till the last day

.of judgement

The most logical ideas and sayings of human beings, if not accompanied by the patience practised by their founders, would have dried off in their throats and tongues. They would have disappeared in the turbulent waves of the ocean of history forever. It is therefore quite clear that patience holds the similar relationship with the religious body, as the position of head relative to a human body. The Commander of Faithful in his sermon "Qaseah" explains the victory of the deprived of history over :the tyrants and success of their noble ideas as follows

When Allah witnessed their patience in resisting the tortures and hardships, which" were inflicted upon them, because of their love for him and following the path Of truth, he opened over them gates of divine assistance in the midst of those difficult bottlenecks of misfortunes. The deprived of yesterday(۱) after they find themselves as rulers and governors. Their glory, fame, prestige, reached to a point, which had (never been imagined in their best of dreams."(۲

And, this is a Tradition of history, which will never be changed till the very end, as the laws of Allah are constant, irrespective Of time. Therefore after the above detailed explanation one could describe in a nutshell the position of patience in the complex of :Islam as follows

Patience is responsible for the fulfilment of all the aspirations, and all the short term .and long term goals whether individual or social

Chapter ۴: The Fields of Patience

point

As explained in the earlier chapters of this book, one

The present book is based on the lectures of Ayatollah Khamene'i at a Mashhad -۱ Mosque ۲۰ years ago as mentioned in the introduction. Now, in retrospect, the best

manifestation of the above sermon of the Commander of the Faithful could be, the victory of the Islamic Revolution on February ۱۱th, ۱۹۷۹. In an article a few years ago written by Dr. Hassan Ghafourifard, the then Head of the Physical Education Organisation in a Sports Magazine, it was mentioned that Ayatollah Khamene'i was confined in Iranshahr (Sistan and Baluchestan Province), a town with the worst climatic conditions in the south-east of Iran, before the victory of Islamic Revolution. Today, by the Grace of Allah he is the Leader of the Muslims. The honour and fame awarded to him and to all other leaders, now who were imprisoned under the Pahlavi (.regime is a clear manifestation of the above sermon. (Tr

Nahj-ul-Balagha Sermon No. ۲۳۴ -۲

may define patience as resistance offered by man on the road towards perfection against the forces of mischief, corruption and degradation. Now let us recognise the fields of patience, where its practice is most crucial. Of course, we would like to examine the domain of patience, in accordance with the texts of Islamic narrations and the Holy Qur'an, where, practicing patience has been promised with plenty of .rewards in this world as well as in the Hereafter

There is no doubt, that an ignorant soldier or a mercenary fighting in the battlefield against the bearers of glad tidings of truth and justice (soldiers of Islam), and even losing his life for the sake of the orders issued by his master; or a tyrant, hoarder of wealth, and holder of an important position, standing against truth for the sake of power, wealth, and position; or various sections or special groups offering resistance for the sake of their vested interests or other reasons, are in fact not practising .patience for the sake of human ideals but opposing the truth

On the surface all these cases show practising of patience. But this is quite opposite than patience practised by pious individuals on the road of perfection for the pleasure of Allah. Of course, as far as the lexical meaning of the term "patience" is concerned .both share it equally

But in all such situations, patience has not been practised for accomplishing human perfection and ideals, rather for their suppression. Here the resistance was not offered against

the forces of mischief, corruption and degradation, but instead it was offered to destroy the shining manifestations of human perfection. Therefore, this domain of .patience is not the domain as defined in the traditions and the Holy Qur’an

It could therefore be concluded that patience may be defined as a means of achieving perfection, excellence, and exaltedness, where man endeavours and makes sincere efforts for the ultimate goal of creation, to become a real servant of Allah. His personality ultimately becomes manifestation of all the hidden Potential of human talents and characteristics. In other words achieving the status of a perfect human .(being (Insan-e-Kamil

At this stage all the internal and external obstacles (explained in detail earlier), which complement each other, and in any case are the manifestations of Satanic tactics, are resisted by him, on his forward journey. On this road, all kinds of dangers, headaches and obstacles await the traveller. The opposition provided by them varies in proportion to the traveller's location, movement, and duties. Sometimes for discharging a duty one is confronted with a direct obstacle, while at other times one is .confronted with an indirect barrier in his path

For a mountain climber, trying to scale the highest peaks, confrontation with rocks, thorns, thieves and wolves, all are tantamount to a negative force interfering with his ascent. But sometimes a beautiful scene, a comfortable soft bed, and a shaky companion are also negative forces of another sort, which force the climber to terminate his ascent. Still, at other times

it could be his own sickness, or he has to take care of some sick companions, or might be confronted with some other mishap, which ultimately forces him to terminate his .expedition. This last case may be regarded as an indirect obstacle in his path

The above analogy of mountain climbing is also true for the journey of man on the road of perfection. He is confronted with three kinds of obstacles in this journey. If the compulsory duties and obligations of religion may be considered as the instruments and steps required for forward march on the road of perfection, the forbidden acts of religion may be regarded as diversion from the straight path. And if the unforeseen bitter happenings of life at the time of restlessness and instability are considered responsible for slowing down and ultimately cutting short his journey, then the :obstacles and opposing motives could also divided into the following three categories

I) Desires and passions which are responsible for negligence of compulsory religious) .obligations

.II) Desires and tendencies which encourage man to indulge in forbidden sinful acts)

III) Unforeseen, unhappy happenings which result in breaking his courage and) .steadfastness

Patience means resistance against all three types of barriers, and providing moral courage and necessary momentum for the traveller to continue his forward journey on the road of perfection. It offers resistance against those desires and tendencies which discourage man from performing compulsory obligations, resists the desires for indulging in sinful forbidden acts, and provides zeal and strength to be able to

tolerate the unforeseen and unhappy occurrences, which threaten to break his .determination

With the above explanation one may appreciate the context of this important narration from the holy Prophet (S) as related by the Commander of the Faithful :Imam Ali (a.s.), as follows

The Prophet of Allah had said: Patience is of three kinds -- Patience in tragedies and" unpleasant events, patience in performance of compulsory obligations, and patience ."against sin

On all the above mentioned occasions, like occurrence of a tragic unfortunate happening resulting in loss of life or wealth or both, a situation requiring performance of compulsory obligations, and an alluring sinful pleasure tempting him to indulge in a forbidden act; a type of patience is required where the human being could manifest or display the most superior heroic potential of his hidden exalted qualities. In order that the complete understanding of these Islamic specialities related to the three types of .patience could be made explicitly clear, we will discuss all of them in detail

(Patience in Performance of Obligations (Obedience

All duties and compulsory obligations are accompanied with some headaches and inconveniences, or in other words, they demand some amount of efforts and involvements (positive or negative), which are at odd with the easy going and comfort loving nature of human beings. Starting from the personal compulsory religious obligations such as prayers and fasting till the financial obligations such as"Khums"(۱) and "Zakat"(۲) and collective social obligations such as Hajj, the separation from family and loved ones, sacrificing all the comforts and pleasures of life, and sometimes self-sacrifice

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۱- One fifth levy; a yearly tax upon one's personal savings

۲- Wealth tax to be paid on certain items

itself becomes necessary. Of course, all this does not match with the easy going and comfort loving nature of man. This holds true for all the laws of the world whether .heavenly or man-made, be they right or wrong

Although in principle the law itself has been a necessity and for the same reason it is accepted by mankind, but generally nowhere, it has ever been accepted as something convenient, desirable and sweet by man. The same holds true for the most common international laws and regulations, whose benefits and advantages are explicitly clear for everybody, and their violation will result in serious consequences such as is the .case with traffic laws

Passing through a red light results in most horrible accidents sometimes leading to loss of lives. Although everyone is clearly aware about the consequences of traffic law violations, but in spite of the above it is very common that while awaiting behind a red light, the inner human nature is not comfortable and feels inconvenient. Similar is the case for not being able to drive through a short cut route because of a traffic sign, .again one feels uncomfortable

Although the compulsory religious obligations are based upon the inherent human nature, and without exception to meet its genuine demands, are in reality means and instruments to lead human beings towards perfection and exaltation, but in spite of that it must be said that in practice it requires efforts and difficulties of some sort. For example, in order to perform the compulsory

daily prayers one has to spend some time, must clean his hands and face before prayers, and has to meet other preliminary requirements regarding the dress and place in accordance with the religious guidelines. It is obvious that all of the above are .in conflict with the easy going human nature

During performance of daily prayers, to control thoughts and to achieve the peace of heart and mind strictly for prayers, instead of getting preoccupied in worldly affairs other than Allah, is very important. In order for the prayers to be meaningful, and to be accepted by Allah, it is very important that the gates which allow all external ideas should be thoroughly closed during prayers.(۱)

Of course achieving the above state of mind and heart requires lots of energy and .efforts and is a difficult task

Or fasting, which requires toleration of hunger and thirst for long periods. To resist and struggle against the appetite for eating and drinking, to restrain the eyes from looking at forbidden things of beauty and to resist sexual passions are difficult tasks requiring tremendous amount of resistance. In spite of possessing appetising food and drinks, to be able to impose voluntary self-restrictions, to spend a long hot summer day with empty stomach and dry lips of course, requires a lot of will power .and strong determination

Or Hajj for instance, which requires tolerating the inconvenience and hardships of a long distance journey, separation from home and relatives, and joining groups of unknown companions, and spending money and

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۱- In his book "Sirr-us-Salat"the mysteries of prayers, Imam Khomeini, describes the presence of heart, as follows: "During prayers one must try to completely cut off the heart's preoccupation with worldly affairs. If a person is submerged in love and desires of this world, naturally his heart is busy continuously from one involvement to another. The heart behaves like a bird jumping from one branch to another. So far we have this tree of worldly ambitions or desires ("Hubb-e-Duniya") in our heart, it will

behave restless. If by struggle, practice, efforts, and thinking about the severe consequences and losses, if one could succeed in cutting this tree of worldly ambitions or desires, then the heart will become reposed and peaceful. It will achieve spiritual perfection. At least the more one tries to free himself from worldly charms and temptations the more he succeeds in cutting the various branches of that tree in his heart, with the result, the presence of heart will be achieved in the same proportion." Imam Khomeini further explains the term 'love of this world' "Hubb-e-Duniya"."There are people who do not possess anything at all of this mortal world, but still they could be the persons totally submerged in the love of this world. While on the contrary one may be like Prophet Sulaiman bin Dawood, (Solomon son of David) king of kings and possessing all the treasurers of this universe, but at the same time may not be a man of this world, completely detached from the lure of the world." (Tr.)

precious time. If Hajj is done only for the sake of pleasure of Allah, without any .motives of leisure and profit-making, it will also require patience and self-sacrifice

The obligations regarding encouraging whatever is good (Amr bil Ma'roof) and prohibiting whatever is forbidden (Nahi anil Munkar), as well as Jihad (Striving for .truth), requires a lot of hardship, sacrifice, tolerant and patience

Proclamation of truth in front of the forces of falsehood and Corruption is the most dangerous, unpleasant and bitter act, which is like standing against a tyrant whose unsheathed sword is ready to fall on the proclaimer's head. Or facing the enemies, who are like savage beasts, the glint of whose electrifying eyes and swords stun the heart and soul of superficial observers. Or, to be able to offer resistance against the waves of corruption and diversion of a nation, a class, or mankind as a whole, is the .hardest, dangerous and menacing task

Similar is the case with other Islamic obligations, which are accompanied with headaches, hardships and inconveniences, but at the same time without exception, all of them are the most beneficial, and essential means and guarantees of salvation and prosperity for mankind. Of course, for those who have recognised the straight path and have tasted the sweetness of walking on the difficult road for the pleasure of Allah, and the sacred and exalted aims of humanity, all the above difficulties are .desirable and tolerable

The same prayer for men of Allah, who have tasted the sweetness of fervent prayer

and remembrance of Allah is something sweeter than honey. The Prophet of Islam (S) (at the time of prayers was so eager and restless that he used to tell "Bilal"(١)

Oh! Bilal please recite the call for prayer (Adhan) and make my heart and soul" ."peaceful

The same struggle for the sake of Allah "Jihad fi sabil lillah" for the self-indulgent people without any insight for ultimate consequences is extremely harsh and undesirable, but for someone with a good spiritual insight and power like Imam Ali (a.s.), is sweeter than honey. For him, all inconveniences and hardships in this struggle result in strengthening his power of resistance and steadfastness. He himself describes about his astonishing state of morale in a sermon "Nahj-ul-Balagha" as :follows

Together with the holy Prophet (S) we fought our own fathers, sons, brothers, and" uncles, (but all these unpleasant events had the least influence upon us), except that these increased our faith to surrender ourselves completely to Allah and made the ".hard things tolerable for us

But in general these difficulties and hardships exist for the common people with weaker spiritual insight, and for those who are not possessed with the required .determination and will power, are bitter and undesirable

Now, what should be done regarding these difficulties which exist in dischargement of religious obligations? Since offering of dally compulsory prayers is difficult, presence of heart during prayers and chaining the roaming and wondering thoughts are even harder. Since Fasting, Jihad, Hajj, charity, encouraging good and forbidding evil and other social

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He was born in Mecca, the son of an Abyssinian slave called Rabah; in a city of" -١ idol-worship, he was tortured for his belief in the One and Only Allah. He was made the first muezzin, the caller to prayer in Islam the Prophet (S). After the Prophet's

death Bilal's legs, in his grief, failed him. He could not climb up the steps to make the call to prayer again. He died in Syria, probably in ۶۴۴, twelve years after the Prophet's death. The Black Muslims in America have renamed themselves the Bilali. Prophet ".'(peace be upon him) called Bilal 'a man of Paradise

obligations require pains and inconveniences, then all these should be declared as void. Therefore, we should be allowed to live according to the desires of our heart .which is full of passions and a spirit which loves ease and comforts of life

It is here that Islam tells us No! Instead patience must be practised. Patience in obedience must be practised against those passions which lure the heart away from the prayer carpet, mosque and altar, by getting it preoccupied with hundreds of kinds of amusements, and in turn make prayers spiritless and meaningless. Patience must be practised against these kinds of desires and prayers should be offered completely with presence, of heart and concentration, so that they are accepted by Allah and are fruitful for us. Patience must be offered against those extremist tendencies which .tempt us to enjoy eating and drinking on a hot dry day instead of fasting

Patience must be practised in confrontation with the enemies in battlefield, where the danger shows its real and serious face, and where red death with dynamic speed confronts the man. The pleasures and sweetness of life, memories of children and relatives, and the faces of the loved ones become incarnated in the eyes, and all profit-oriented business transactions in one way or the other attract his attention, and try to make his determination weak and shaky. Resistance should be offered against all these forces. All obstacles and barriers which interfere with the forward .march must be removed from the road

Patience must

be offered against proud tyrant whose eyes burn with anger and whose transgression and corruption has pushed a nation to the brink of catastrophe. Such a tyrant must be opposed by each responsible individual. In this situation it is a .compulsory obligation for everyone to try to overthrow such a despot

Patience should be practiced against the whispers of Satan, who with thousands of colourful deceits will try to close charitable hands by reminding me of personal needs instead of helping others, by inciting desires for material profits and other worldly ambitions, and will ultimately prevent a person from righteous deeds. He will try to emphasize that the light in the own home is more important than the candle of the mosque's niche (Mehrab). Here, patience comes into picture by offering the necessary resistance to the above desires, to enable one to discharge his financial and religious obligations. Yes! Patience should be practiced. Yes! One should be patient in obedience and fulfilment of these religious commands. Resistance should be offered .against the Satanic whispers and passions encouraging transgression

Each case where such resistance is offered assumes a special meaning and special importance in proportion to the greatness of that particular situation. At one place, resistance means to be steadfast in facing the enemy in the battlefield, or it may be confrontation with the self, and sometimes it may be the struggle to remain .indifferent while facing the pangs of poverty and other difficulties

Therefore, patience means to be able to offer resistance in

all the above circumstances. Patience never allows us to surrender with folded hands, .to be insulted, to give up the initiative, and become prisoner of the events

Examples of Patience in Obedience in the Lives of the Infallible Imams

The key phrase which has been emphasised a lot in the pilgrimage book "Ziyarat-nama" of the Imams, is patience. i.e., "You! (Imams) remained patient, and this patience was practiced with pleasure for the sake of Allah. You! accepted the heavy load of carrying the trust, and in spite of all the difficulties and hardships, you ".delivered it to its final destination

Truly, the responsibility of guiding mankind and explaining them the truth of religion, and resisting tyranny, corruption, and transgression during the days of the Imams, like any other time, was a difficult task requiring a lot of patience and strong .determination

If the patience practiced by the Imams would have been of such a type that although unhappy about the bad conditions of their times, with hearts bleeding for the worsening plight of Muslims and Islam, they had confined themselves to the safe boundaries of their homes without taking any concrete steps for destruction of evil and betterment of situation in favour of the community, then this type of patience would not have been of any special distinction, prestige and honour. There is nothing special in this kind of inert behaviour and anybody could do it easily. Of course, this .type of conduct is practiced by weak and uncommitted persons

The prominence and glory which distinguish the lives of the holy Imams, and the special

characteristics which may be repeated while reciting salutations as mentioned in the "Ziyarat-nama", was their being patient in obedience to Allah. This is an area, in which many ordinary people found themselves helpless, and could not tolerate the .hardships and therefore failed to achieve that honour and distinction

Review of the Holy Qur'an

It would not be out of context to remind here that among tens of verses regarding the patience of those who have been patient, there are many verses about patience in :obedience, such as follows

If there are twenty patient (steadfast) ones among you, they will overcome two" hundred (of the infidels) and if there are a hundred (such ones), they will overcome a (thousands" (The Holy Qur'an, ۸:۶۵

The above verse emphasises the importance of offering resistance and being steadfast while confronting the interior motives within the self, which act as obstacles in the path of a soldier facing an enemy in the battlefield. The patient people who have been mentioned in the above verse are those that neither the flashing swords, nor the burning eyes of the enemies, neither the angry face of red death nor the memories of friends and children, and pleasures and charms of life, stop them in discharging their obligation to engage in bloody hostilities in the battlefield. And none .of the above make a slight dent in their iron will for obeying Allah

Another verse from the Holy Qur'an regarding the importance of patience in :obedience is as follows

,Our Lord! Bestow on us endurance, make our foothold sure"

(and give us help against the disbelieving folk." (The Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۵۰

The above verse refers to a group of believers who in order to discharge a compulsory obligation have readied themselves to confront an enemy in the battlefield. They are asking Allah to bless them with the spirit of endurance and steadfastness in facing the obstacles in their path, and with the result bestow upon them the fruit of their endurance, that is achieving victory over the enemies (unbelievers). This verse very explicitly explains the meanings of patience in obedience. There are many such verses in the Holy Qur'an, and the detailed .discussions about them is beyond the scope of our present discussion

Patience Against Sin

Naturally, human beings are possessed with desires and passions, which encourage as well as discourage them in doing certain acts. In reality these are instruments for performing all actions, efforts and endeavours by men in their live span. These are called instincts such as, love for self, love for children, love for wealth, love for power, .sexual desires, and scores of other such attractions and desires

What are the instructions of Islam regarding the above natural human instincts? And how the human beings are supposed to behave while confronting their natural instincts? Do they have to surrender themselves to these instincts without any limit or condition? Should these passions be suppressed? Or should they be made completely disabled by means of superimposing rigorous self-discipline? According to the Islamic .view none of the above methods are the correct treatment

On the

contrary under no circumstances, Islam ignores the human instincts, rather it considers them useful and something real to be reckoned with. Islam closes the paths of transgression and Aggression, but on the other hand by utilising realistic preventive measures. It dissipates the pervasive energy associated with them. In reality, as the basic existence of instinct among human beings is a means for continuation of life, as well as for providing the essential necessities of life, similarly mutiny, aggression and transgression of instinctive passions result in catastrophe and misfortune to human .life

If the instinct of love for the self did not exist, continuation of human life would have not been possible. But at the same time excessiveness and transgression of the above instinct makes the affairs of life difficult, and sometimes may make it impossible. Similar is the case with other instincts. Among the three types of patience mentioned earlier, patience against sin means offering resistance against the fire of rage or diversion of instinctive passions, because basically sin or transgression against Allah's law is nothing but the above acts of diversion, transgression and .aggression of instincts

Human beings are naturally inclined to endeavour for arranging the necessities of life and other essential requirements. Since this could not be accomplished without having wealth and money, therefore the motive to earn money and wealth .constitutes a natural instinct

Also, Islam being a school of mankind and way of life, encourages the above instinct and certifies it by putting its own signature. Of course, it

does it for the right administration of the society and accordingly establishes the methods, procedures and limitations, but never stops human beings form making .endeavours for earning a livelihood

In spite of all that, in many instances, this instinct of love for money and hoarding of wealth takes its roots in the human soul like a chronic disease and with the result, the money no longer remains as a means for providing the requirement. Rather it turns into an intense desire for executing the inhuman goals or tools of self-glorification, which is condemned from the Islamic point of view. It is here that Islam decrees its followers to be patient by offering resistance against the transgression and diversion .of instinctive forces

The other example of human instinct could be love for power. By nature human beings crave for power. Certainly those who have accepted weakness, and humility as essential elements of their existence must believe that they have deviated from the assigned human nature. Islam, in this regards too, utilises the same approach as it .does for dealing with all other instinctive desires

On one side the efforts and endeavours in the path of achieving power have been commended as something desirable and permissible, and in certain circumstances even considered as compulsory. Yes! Islam considers power necessary where it is required for establishing the truth, for dischargement of important social obligations, for reinstatement of lost rights of their rightful owners, and for execution of divine commands and decrees. In these cases Islam has

.made it mandatory for all Muslims to gain power

While on the other hand, in Islam, the path of this instinct towards aggression and ambitions has been closed. When the instinct of love for power results in tyranny, oppression, brute force and savage crimes, this has been condemned as an .undesirable and forbidden act

It is possible that association with a powerful tyrant or with a destructive organisation may bring ample power for an ambitious person, but Islam never sanctions such an association, because the act of associating with a tyrant is a direct support for strengthening tyranny. The balance of power which results from this kind of .association is responsible for commitment of crimes

Here the decrees of Islam and the Holy Qur'an are in direct confrontation with the outburst and diversion of human instincts and closes the path for them. The Muslims are ordered to struggle and offer resistance against the motives of this type of love for power, which result in mischief and corruption, and should never surrender to .such ambitious tyrants, which means patience against sin

There are other examples of instincts such as sexual desires, love for fame, love for life, and etc., which could also be likewise examined, resulting in a better .understanding of important individual and social issues

The Importance of Patience Against Sin

In the light of this brief discussion and in view of the traditions and Islamic learning which are generally full of social education, it may be concluded that patience against .sins and transgressions has been assigned a special importance

According to

a few short traditions dealing with special circumstances and giving a constructive lesson for the endeavouring Muslims of the period of the infallible Imams, this branch of patience has been considered a crucial support and has been assigned special privilege. Perhaps it may be because offering patience in obedience is something accompanied with the natural desire (instinct) existing within human beings, the same .natural instinct which is responsible for action and efforts

While on the other hand to be able to resist the desires for diversions, and not to surrender to the appealing attractions of various obstacles, which are full of sweet and desirable natural attractions, is the field of patience against sin. In this case not only one is not supported by natural attractions and instinct, rather one is acting in the .opposite direction

Therefore, practicing patience in obedience although means struggling against the natural instinctive(۱) attractions such as human desires for ease and comfort, nevertheless it is accompanied and supported by another natural instinct, however weak. But patience against sin or transgression against laws of Allah, is in total and direct confrontation with all the natural instinctive attractions and pleasures, and accordingly this kind of struggle is more difficult and therefore has been assigned .special privilege

Also, patience against sins plays a determining role as far as the social affairs are concerned and since its effect is relatively more conspicuous, this could be another .reason for assigning special privilege to this kind of patience

Chapter ۵: Historical Examples

point

For example let us consider the

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۱ - This instinct is a part of the real human structure, although its transgression and diversion is something unnatural and undesirable which should be resisted by human

beings

two very prominent faces of Islamic History and compare them with each other. One of them is enlightened, honourable and exciting while the other one is hated and condemned. These two faces belong to two persons who have been offered exactly similar and equivalent opportunities. Or it may be said that they both travelled together and reached simultaneously at an intersection, and in action, each one .selected a different direction

One of them because of choosing the right path becomes the greatest and most honourable Islamic personality, and the another one, because of his choosing the wrong path becomes the most detested and deplorable face of Islamic history. One of them is Omar bin Sa'd who is the commander of the Omayyad army to suppress the rising of Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.). The other one is Hurr bin Yazid Riyahi(۱) who is another commander of the same army and who had been dispatched earlier on an assignment to follow and keep strict vigilance on the movements of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and his followers, and had already committed an act of Aggression against the .(.revolutionary army of Imam Husayn (a.s

Each of them started their march on the road almost simultaneously. The ruling Omayyad regime was being threatened by a revolutionary force. The revolutionary freedom-giving fire was behind the ashes all over the Hijaz and was about to ignite inside Iraq. Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) considering the Islamic obligations and realising great responsibility upon his shoulders had taken a giant revolutionary

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Hurr on the morning of Ashura, came over to Imam Husayn's (a.s.) camp and - ۱ (.preferred to die as a martyr. (Ed

step by rising against the corrupt and dictatorial regime of the Omayyads. He took this giant heroic step to register forever in the history of Islam, the most practical and fundamental lesson for the coming generations.

This rising therefore was a dangerous and a serious threat for the ruling regime, and naturally it was forced to mobilise all the resources at its disposal to suppress and crush this revolutionary uprising. The above two persons (Omar bin Sa'd and Hur bin Yazid) were part of the vast resources of that tyrant regime, which were mobilised against this revolutionary movement and against its founder Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.).

Therefore, in the very beginning both these persons manifest themselves as the two important pawns (of chess play) on the playground for the game which was actually being played by an usurper caliph (Yazid ibn Mua'wiyah). They were the mercenaries of the caliph to execute his decisions and commands in Karbala. But apart from that, they(۱) too voluntarily accepted this assignment for the sake of their love for self, love for material gains, and desires and temptations aroused by their animal instincts.

Omar bin Sa'd came to Karbala because of his obsession for achieving power and position. Since his birth he was ignorant about religion and faith. For him the promise made by the Caliph for the governorship of Rayy (presently the southern suburb of modern Tehran), was the most valuable and dearest thing than Yazid and obedience to his command.

Hur bin Yazid too started his

۱- This has been explained by the lady Fatima daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.) in her sermon at Kufa.

assignment for accomplishing similar goals. Both of them were aware that whatever they were going to accomplish meant committing a sin and a major one. But human passions and transgression of instinct for power and ambitions did not allow them to ponder about the consequences of their would-be assignment (war with Imam Husayn [a.s.]), and ultimately put them on the road, which terminated into the most .filthiest and beastly happening in human history

Both of them were faced with the most critical and sensitive decisions of their lives. One of the road was leading them towards the sensual desires which are the same natural instincts such as love for power and ambitions, and the other one was leading them towards discharging their Islamic duty by joining the righteous forces of Imam .(.Husayn (a.s

At this critical juncture, the thing which could have rescued both of them was supposed to be nothing else but patience. Yes! By practicing patience one may overcome these destructive selfish passions. These strange destructive forces can only be controlled by the power of patience. Patience may enable you to resist against .the temptations for committing sins and transgression of the Laws of Allah

At this sensitive and determining moment, Omar bin Sa'd could not resist against these deadly passions, and therefore failed. The knotted rope of love for power and position was fallen over his neck, and he was being pulled towards hell. Although being a powerful and strong person, he was helpless to offer any resistance about his

being fallen into this disgrace. Eventually he was overcome with impatience and was vanquished by the motives of lust for power. And finally pulled by the rage of deadly .instinctive passions, fell down all the way into the bottom of Hell

Hur bin Yazid too encountered the same situation. He was being confronted with a critical dilemma. If he would have allowed himself to be led by the desires and passions of his soul, he would have completed the assignment satisfactorily (which was assigned to him by Yazid), and would have ignored the awakening inner voice of his conscience by believing himself to be only an executioner of orders issued by the .caliph, and thus, could have achieved the highest position of power

For him if the governorship of Rayy was not into consideration, certainly something equivalent to that was kept in mind. For he too, after all was a human being, and therefore a knotted rope of greed, desire, and rage of instinctive passions was tied to his neck and was pulling hi-m towards hell. He was pulled almost to the brink of fire i.e. .the line dividing the two opposing camps in the plains of Karbala

The camp of Husayn (a.s.) was manifestation of ready paradise, fountainhead of genuine Islamic values, splendour of human spirit, and the defender of real Islam. It was in a direct face-to-face confrontation with the Yazidi camp. Which was the manifestation of ready hell, the degradation and humility of mankind, the scene of hypocrisy, deceit and

lies, and the bastion of ignorance which, in the name of Islam was imposed upon the .society

Yes! The negative forces of degradation pulled him up to these limits (i.e. brink of hell), but suddenly a heroic grand power, an awakening from within, at the right moment took control of him and rescued him from this sudden fall. It gave him, a severe jolt .and sheared off the rope of desires and passions which was tied to his neck

By offering resistance against this violent instinctive passion, and by remaining patient against this great sin, which was tantamount to waging war against the forces representing the total truth for the sake of forces which were the manifestation of total blasphemy, not only did Hur rescue himself, but jumped into the kingdom of .paradise from the very brink of fire

In the above event there is a lesson for those who are interested in in-depth studies of human history. It clearly shows the importance of this branch of patience (against sin), in organising the great struggle between truth and falsehood, which ultimately .determines the interpretation of history, and decides the destiny of a society

Some other Examples of Patience against Sin

In order to study in detail the examples of this branch of patience, we must recollect a series of different kind of deviations and great sins. It will be proved that patience has :played the most crucial role in each situation, such as follows

A powerful strong mounted fist has been raised and is about to fall over the head of an

innocent person, and there is absolutely -no obstacle in its path, is a scene requiring this branch of patience. The strong instinctive forces consisting of anger, pride, selfishness, and other desires, urge this raised fist to strike against the innocent person's head. In this situation patience means offering resistance against these .instinctive motives and to control oneself against committing this transgression

Someone may have an easy access to lot of money and wealth, only if he could cross over the bridge, namely committing a murder, or indulging in a sinful act. Here the natural lust for the love of wealth, an extremely violent deviated instinctive force, takes control of the person to commit that crime. Here patience means offering resistance against these motives, and to ignore the potential gains at the cost of a crime or sin. This may be regarded as another example of practicing this branch of .patience

The sexual urges are extremely powerful and intense, which may be compared to a swamp, which swallows the elephants together with the elephant drivers. It is exactly for the reason that this super magical characteristic had been exploited as an easy and suitable means for humiliating and degrading the towering great human souls, by the enemies of human progress and exaltedness throughout the history. Patience in these situations means resisting the powerful sexual urges, by not indulging in a lower .shameful sexual act

Fear or danger are common characteristics which are common among ordinary people. It could be a product of many instincts

or may consist of a single instinct. But in many situations it plays a key role in bringing all kinds of humiliation, insults, imprisonment, crimes and catastrophes. In many instances the weak individuals under the influence of fear or danger submitted themselves to perform the most lowly shameful tasks as well as committed horrible crimes, and ultimately lost their lives, wealth, position, honour, prestige, and children. In one instance they fell down from the highest peaks of human exaltedness and lowered themselves to become simply a tool without any determination in the hands of enemies. Endurance against these forces of violence and Corruption could be .regarded as another scene for the display of this branch of patience

Review of some Narrations

point

Here it would be worthwhile to ponder over some of the narrations regarding this branch of patience, which have been narrated by the infallible Imams, and are full of important revealing lessons. Asbagh bin Nabatah who is a companion of Imam Ali :(a.s.) quotes from him as follows

There are two types of patience, one of them is patience during tragedies or" catastrophes, which is very good and charming, but there is another type of patience, which is far better and more charming than the above, i.e. patience against acts (forbidden by Allah."(١

Narration No.٢

Here Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq (a.s.) quotes the Prophet's (S), prediction of :the state of affairs of his Ummah as follows

The people will face a period in which power and authority will come only through" bloodshed and brute oppression. Wealth will be

amassed by usurping the rights of others and by stinginess. Love will be realised only by giving up faith and pursuing carnal desires. Whoever should find that period should have patience in poverty because it will be better than faith, patience against grudge because it will be better than love, and patience against humility because it is better than honour. Allah will grant the reward of fifty truthful persons who believed in the (Prophet".(١)

This prediction was witnessed by the Muslims of that time, during the shameful life of Mu'awiya and his son Yazid and their successor caliphs, wealth and other financial comforts could only be achieved by means of usurpation of the rights of the deprived, transgression of weaker classes, exploitation of masses, stinginess and restrictions in .financial dues, and indifference to the genuine demands of deprived masses

Or in other words the Prophet predicted that the natural development of the Islamic Ummah would not be such that each individual will be possessing plenty of wealth and material comforts without inflicting the least injury to the rest of the community (i.e. the rest of the community would still have the fair opportunities to earn wealth and other material comforts). Rather gaining wealth and other material comforts, by a certain special class could only be made possible by transgressing and exploiting the rights of the rest of the community. This prediction was also witnessed as the Islamic .Ummah transformed into various social classes

Popularity or fame could only be accomplished by discarding

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al-Kafi vol. ٢ -١

the spirit of faith from one's life and existence, and by completely submitting to the carnal desires of the self. In other words the love of masses or corrupt leaders could be achieved only by practising flattery, lies, hypocrisy, cheating, surrendering to desires and passions, deceiving and making people feel proud, covering up blunders, misportraying the realities and disregarding the famous notion of "Amr bil Maroof wa .Nahi anil Munkar" i.e. encouraging good and discouraging forbidden acts, etc

The above prediction by the Prophet (S) is full of wisdom, foretelling the would-be state of affairs of the Islamic community in the near future, in which, the level of thinking and insight of the people will be lowered, Islamic values will decline, the Islamic judicial system will be degraded, and the general affairs of the Muslims will .become chaotic

It is of course obvious, that these happenings in the life of the Islamic community, which was founded on the pillars of real Islamic values, or in other words the train of that community which started its journey on the rails of Islamic thoughts and ideology, was not possible, without the active involvement and subversive acts of some powerful, hidden, and mischievous hands, operating to execute a calculated .plan to destroy the Islamic community from within

The above prophecy by the Prophet (S) clearly throws light about the usurpation of political power, which may be regarded as the most inhuman act in the history of !Islam. Yes! The Prophet warned about these would-be occurrences. Alas

They happened too soon. When people appeared before the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (a.s.), they witnessed in his sayings and deeds, nothing but seriousness and decisiveness, for correcting the deviated state of affairs of the Islamic community by pulling all the violators and sinners before the court of law. And to obtain Allah's justice for their violations and transgressions, to restore the lost genuine rights of the rightful owners. His brother Aqeel when approached him to seek a financial favour, had to face a red hot iron bar and was turned down with a sad reply. Aqeel or any other person, when he approached Mu’awiya, was welcomed with .smiling face and open arms and rewarded with plenty of ready money

It was therefore natural that persons whose conscience was not influenced by the logic of Islamic thoughts were more inclined towards Mu’awiya than Imam Ali (a.s.). Therefore, this consideration that Muawiya lacked fame and popularity during his reign is not correct. Notwithstanding the fact that people of Medina and Kufa, who were under the direct influence of the towering personality of Imam Ali (a.s.) and were familiar with the basics of Islamic ideology, the rest of the people of the Islamic lands, throughout Muawiyah’s rein, because of the suffocation of free thinking and enquiry, the Propaganda practised by the Omayyad bands, special characteristics of the people for loving to be mercenaries of the regime, considered him a competent, respectable, and charismatic personality. They bestowed upon him the honourable title

.of "Khal-al-Muslimeen"(۱) i.e. the maternal uncle of the believers

Of course, this fame and popularity was achieved by means of special tactical conduct of Muawiya with the influential tribal chiefs who had considerable domination over the masses, and some manipulated them to lower their heads before Muawiya. For these services they were showered with unlimited affection, were blessed with plenty of wealth and power, and their hands were allowed to let open to commit all kinds of horrible crimes and tortures against the poor deprived masses who possessed no .other shelter

These chiefs, in order to be benevolent towards their "Lord of Affluence" (Vali Nemat), and in order to maintain the status quo, and to exploit the situation to their best advantage opened their tongues in praising him, and all of his faults and defects, or the type of faults he admired, were presented to the masses as his exalted qualities .and arts

This was the picture of the would-be state of affairs of the Islamic community as foreseen by the prophetic eyes of the Prophet (S). Now in confronting with such a state of affairs and facing an incompetent and sinister regime, what are the obligations of the people? The answer to this question was provided by the narration .in previous pages

Anyone who happens to face that period as predicted by the Prophet,(S) either in the near or distant future, must remain steadfast while facing poverty and indigence and should offer resistance against the instinctual motives for hoarding wealth and possessing other

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۱- Since Mua'wiyah's sister Umm-e-Habibah was the Prophet's wife, and like his other spouses was called Mother of Believers. With this misconstrued logic Mua'wiyah's father Abu-Sufyan, a hard-core heathen would be called as "Grandfather of Believers" and his wife Hind, the eater of the liver of the Prophet's uncle Martyr !"Hamza would be called "Grandmother of Believers

material benefits. While he had the option to act like his contemporaries, who by utilising the usual means, were busy in accumulation of wealth and other material gains, and passed through this difficulties naively, as though nothing unusual had happened. He too, by accepting the filth, by indulging in crimes, submitting to insults and captivation, giving up his dignity, honour, and exaltedness, and turning his back against all the values and ideals, could have achieved the comfortable and luxurious .life and therefore would have fulfilled his carnal desires

He should close his eyes over the wealth, power and riches in his reach, at the cost of bringing poverty and destitution for thousands of people, as well as over the hot and .delicious food for him, at the cost of hunger for unlimited number of destitute masses

He should endure patiently for remaining lonely, unknown and blamed against the instinctive motives of desiring status, fame and popularity. While having the option of receiving the favour of ignorant masses or leaders with vested interests, by opening his tongue for flattery, praise, lies, deceit and shutting up his lips for supporting the truth, closing his eyes for encouragement of good and forbiddance of evil, and .conscientiously electing to do otherwise

Realising the divine obligations entrusted to him, and his personal duties, with full awareness he accepts demotion of his status, becomes hated in the eyes of tyrants, .and lets his prestige and honour be usurped and trampled by the oppressors

He should be patient and satisfied

for possessing only lower social status and should tolerate deprivation from higher prestigious positions offering better material gains and power. He should not opt for accepting titles and important positions of power at the cost of committing inhuman shameful crimes. Allah Almighty's reward for someone who practices the above advises in his deeds, would be equivalent to the reward earned by fifty righteous .(believers during the period of the Prophet (S

And therefore this heavenly saying which emanates from a celestial heart and whose value is tantamount to a divine revelation, while offering the most important and in-depth training, regarding social issues, also reflects the meanings and value of this .(branch of patience (against sin

(Patience Against Unpleasant Events (Tragedies

point

The human life is always accompanied by events and unpleasant calamities, and there is no escape from such happenings. The human structure has been created in such a way, that it has to deal with these imposed situations, i.e. always encountering unpleasant events and calamities during the entire span of our lives. The following famous sentence of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) describes the :above theme as follows

".The world is like a house which has been encircled with temptations and calamities"

Sickness, physical handicaps, financial losses, death of loved ones and deprivations are some of the few' examples of the inevitable happenings from which there is no escape. Even the most prosperous class of people are not immune against these types of occurrences. When such calamities befall, naturally, without any choice or intention of our

own, in our lives, usually there are two types of reactions shown by the people, as :follows

Some people, on account of the calamity give up their resistance completely and .١ .therefore become spiritually handicapped

The other group of people, bear with patience considering it a natural thing of this .٢ .worldly life, and come out of it intact and with dignity

According to the famous Persian poet Roudaki(١) the merit, greatness, and leadership of a man is tested during his encounter with calamity. Grief, crying, and lamentation which are the ways of weak, timid-hearted and impatient individuals, in itself is ` strong natural passion. Which imposes a violent emotional force upon the human structure, whereby all the body parts are employed to perform a particular function. The eyes shed tears, the tongue complains, the throat groans, and the hands, feet, .and head, are all involved in performing special actions and movements

Patience, against calamities means not to surrender to these violent emotional outbursts. A patient human being, while facing such tragedies does not give up his morale and maintains his composure and control. These tragedies do not make him depressed and discouraged, and do not stop him from making efforts and endeavours for accomplishing the main goals in the real life. Therefore this type of patience (against calamities) is also important, and has been termed as fair and .charming in the narration quoted earlier

Now, let us consider the case of a wayfarer who starts his journey in a certain direction so that he

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Ja'far bin Muhammad 'Roudaki" regarded as the father of Persian poetry, - ١ (.flourished in the Samanid Court at Bukhara in the ٩th-١٠th century AD. (Ed

could reach the final desired Destination if upon encountering each unpleasant accident, and after receiving a small injury, he gives up his morale and looses his composure, then it is obvious that such a person will never complete this journey and will never reach the final Destination Resistance, offered against these motives of Depression while facing these tragedies is a key factor, which not only secures the high morale, but moreover, this endurance in itself, is an exercise, which is beneficial for building up the determination and strong iron-will among human beings, which are .the pre-requisites for continuation of the difficult journey

Therefore patience against natural tragedies which befall human beings, without any :option or choice, consists of the following two important advantages

Firstly, it secures and maintains the high morale, which is responsible for all constructive involvement, and further acts as an obstacle to prevent it from getting .lost or being destroyed completely

Secondly, it builds up the human determination or will power, which is an important means for all positive actions, and further it provides the required endurance to face .the optional tragedies

The special encouragement and excitement shown by the religious guardians about this type of patience, clearly demonstrates its constructive and miraculous role. In the following two narrations the deep philosophy of this branch of patience could be .clearly demonstrated

First Narration

Whoever has not equipped himself with the weapon of patience, during hardships" and calamities of the time, will be subjected to a state of weakness and helplessness".[١]

Second Narration

For a believer, if a"

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al-Kafi vol. ۲, p. ۹۳ -۱

position and rank, has been taken into consideration by Allah, which could never be accomplished by deeds alone, he is inflicted with physical sickness, or loss of wealth, or tragedies to his loved ones, and in case, he remains patient, he is awarded by Allah (the assigned position and rank)"(۱)

In the above narration the constructive and exalted role of patience has been demonstrated explicitly.

Othman bin Maz'oon, who was an experienced Muslim and had migrated to Ethiopia and Madina, during the early period of Islam, lost his young son at Madina. This tragedy was so devastate that he decided to spend all his remaining life inside his house in prayers, and suddenly stopped all his social involvement completely. His depression after the death of his young son was so intense, that he wished never to face the pleasures of life again.

The Prophet (S) after hearing about his state of affairs, paid him a courtesy visit and advised him to change his decision. The Prophet (S) said that Islam does not allow monastic life (renunciation of world), sitting in an isolated corner, engrossed prayers. The renunciation of the world by Islamic Ummah means, participation in Jihad for the sake of Allah.

Therefore, patience against unforeseen tragedies, for which we have no choice, means to be able to tolerate the injury caused by the calamity without giving up the morale, and to be able to continue the routine normal involvement of the real life, and eventually forgetting the tragedy with the passage of

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۱- Safinatul Bihar vol. ۲, p. ۵

.time

Patience Against Optional Tragedies

This branch of patience surpasses in excellence other situations because in this case a conscientious, and aware human being arises to accomplish a certain goal, and offers resistance against all the hardships and unpleasant events which are inflicted upon him during this course. But in spite of facing all these severe calamities does not get demoralised, depressed, and continues his movement towards the cherished .goal

If we perform an in-depth analysis for research purposes, regarding the state of affairs of human societies in history, looking for lofty human ideals, and specially the goals aspired by divine Prophets, which were always in conflict with the classes representing the tyrants and profiteers, and therefore were always opposed by them; it would become crystal clear that there had always been permanent war and Confrontation between the proclaimers of these higher goals and the powerful .classes of tyrants and oppressors

There are plenty of verses in the Holy Qur'an which throw considerable light regarding the historical Confrontation between the Prophets of Allah and the representative of false deities (Taghout). Since this Confrontation between truth and falsehood is inevitable, therefore it is necessary for the followers of the path of truth, proclaimers of justice and righteousness, and the truth seekers and researchers following the path of divine Prophets, to know and predict in advance that the path of .truth is accompanied by all kinds of hardships and calamities

The Holy Qur'an, in order to make the believers ready for confronting the problems, announces in advance clearly the potential

dangers on the path of truth, and brings the historical realities to their attention as :follows

Assuredly you will be tried in your property and in your persons and you will hear" much wrong from those who were given the scripture before you and from the idolaters. But if you are patient and guard yourselves (against evil), then it is a matter (of (great) resolve. " (The Holy Qur’an, ۳: ۱۸۶

In reality, those who wanted to live like a believer or slave of Allah, and also wanted to be responsible towards the divine obligations and other commitments assigned to them, realised that they will be opposed and subjected to different kind of hardships by their opponents, and they soon witnessed the truth of this Qur'anic prediction with .their own eyes in their own period

Of course, the one who enjoys an important position and rank and whose faith and actions are more determined in the path of Allah would be more effective. And therefore in the same proportion will be subjected to severe hardships and tragedies by the opponents, whose tolerant is indeed difficult. There is a famous narration :quoted from Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a.s.) as follows

Among all the people, the prophets were inflicted with the harshest calamities, and" after them, those who were closer to the prophets were subjected to similar kinds of (hardships and calamities". (۱)

Of course, these calamities are not like the type of unforeseen natural tragedies, as described earlier, for which a human being has absolutely no control or

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(Safinatul Bihar) -۱

choice, rather in this case everyone has the option to choose. In case he desires and prefers the comfortable and easy life of this world, and to remain immune against these types of calamities, he may elect to do so. What makes these events inevitable .is the movement towards the cherished goal

Every easy going person who prefers the comfortable environment of his home and never takes the trouble to venture outside the four walls of his house, would never face the inconveniences and problems encountered in a journey. But at the same time, he will never benefit from the experiences which are possible only by going through an adventurous journey. He would remain safe throughout his life from such events as, slipping from the mountain peak, facing a beast in the jungle, and being .robbed by bandits, which are likely events of an adventurous journey

Like every naive and irresponsible human being who has not recognized the aims of life, and has not taken any steps towards that goal, and prefers an uneventful life without headaches, would be better advised to follow the decree of the following :verse of Sa'di, the famous Iranian poet as follows

Although inside the sea there are plenty of material gains. But if you prefer safety," "!you better stay on the shore

According to this logic(۱), one could easily choose the option to remain immune from all the troubles, headaches, and injuries etc., which are a pre-requisite for joining the .path of the prophets

Therefore, the calamities on the

۱- Like the French poet Gautier who once during wartime stated: "I prefer lying down to sitting, I prefer sitting to standing, and I prefer remaining home to going out. I will know nothing of the war they say has engulfed the whole world, unless a bullet shatters the window of my house" (Tr.)

path of the prophets are optional tragedies, in the sense that they are inflicted upon those, who are taking commands from the following saying of the Commander of the :Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) as follows

By taking giant steps on the divine path, they throw themselves into the whirlpool of" ".tragedies

Therefore, they succeeded in announcing the positive and definite reply to the divine invitation to support the truth. Hence, patience against optional tragedies is the important type of patience, relative to other categories. This branch of patience .reflects the highest degree of human exaltedness in facing the optional tragedies

This type of patience means accepting tragedies in spite of the fact that all instinctual motives, are forcing him to turn his back in the middle of the path and stop offering resistance anymore; yet he continues offering resistance, and never feels sorry or .ashamed to be inflicted with severe blows on the righteous path

Khabbab bin al-Arth, is ranked among the top Muslims, who accepted the invitation of the holy Prophet (S) to Islam, and offered a lot of sacrifices. Because of his conversion to Islam, he lost a significant portion of his property and possessions. One day, he complained to the Prophet (S) about his severe financial loss. He himself narrates as follows: "The Prophet (S) had spread his robe on the ground, and was reclining with his back against the Holy Ka'bah. When he listened to my complaint, he changed his :relaxed sitting position, and his composure changed, and said

Your predecessors"

sometimes were slaughtered by the iron saw, cutting their skin, veins, and flesh all ,(۱) the way down till the bones. But they remained committed to their faith, and never complained, even when in some cases, their bodies were cut off into two equal pieces. Allah will carry this movement (Islam) till its perfection. The distance a rider travels between Sana (Capital of Yemen) and Hadhramut, (Region in the southern part of Yemen) roads and highways will be so safe, under the Islamic state and Islamic system that nobody will be afraid of anything but Allah, and the flock of sheep will not ".be scared of anyone but wolf

Therefore, the Prophet (S) by delivering these fiery speeches instilled his followers with the spirit of resistance and iron will, and encouraged them to be Patient, while facing the calamities which were inflicted upon them for the sake of their belief in Allah. It is quite possible that some one by practising patience for discharging Islamic obligations (i.e. patience in obedience), or by offering resistance against instinctual passions (i.e. patience against sin), may be genuinely included in the list of believers .and may start walking on the path whose other end leads to Allah

But once confronted with accidents and tragedies, which are essential and inevitable part of this journey, he may not withstand, and in the middle of the path, face moral break down, weakness of faith, hopelessness, and other such reasons and on account of impatience, may decide to return without

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۱ - The Prophet was referring to believers in the mission of earlier Prophets, who in those distant times were subjected to all sorts of inhuman atrocities by the idolaters. The main theme of the messages of all divine Prophets was Monotheism (belief in the (.One and Only Allah) and Islam, which means submission to Allah's will. (Ed

completing the journey, disregarding the dischargement of duties, which were assigned to him. Therefore the completion of journey on this path with certainty, and without any doubt for not breaking in the middle, is made possible only by practicing .(this type of patience (i.e. patience against optional tragedies

Ways for Encouraging this Branch of Patience

In view of its importance and fundamental role, many verses of the Holy Qur'an focus on this particular branch of patience, so that Muslims could feel the charm of this special struggle in their heart and spirit. One of the ways for being patient against optional tragedies is to ponder on tragedies which are beyond our control. In order that the confrontation with death may not be difficult for the wayfarers on the path of Allah, the Holy Qur'an reminds us that: Death is destined for all human beings. Those who do not die on the battlefield will eventually die on their beds in their homes. Life and death all belong to Allah, and the deeds which are accounted for his path carry .the best of compensation and bonus from Allah the almighty

Muhammad is not but a Messenger, (other) Messenger have passed away before" him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels? He who turned back does not hurt Allah the least, and Allah will reward the thankful" (The Holy (Qur'an, ۳: ۱۴۴

Oh you who believe! be not as those who disbelieved and said of their brethren who" went abroad in the land

or were fighting in the field: Had they been (here) with us they would not have died or been killed; that Allah may make it anguish in their hearts. Allah gives life and causes (death, and Allah beholds of what you do. (The Holy Qur’an, ۳: ۱۵۶

Those who, sat at their home said to their brethren (who were fighting for the cause" of Allah): If they had been guided by us they would not have been slain: say (unto them, ۰ Muhammad): Then avert death from yourself if you are truthful." (The Holy (Qur’an, ۳: ۱۶۸

The other method consists of reminding the progress accomplished by accepting these calamities on the desired path, and the severe blows dealt to the obstacles on .the path by these means

Faint not nor grieve, for you will overcome them if you are indeed believers." (The" (Holy Qur’an, ۳: ۱۳۹

If you have received a blow, the disbelieving people have received a blow the like" thereof. These are (only) the vicissitudes which we cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that Allah may know those who believe and may choose witnesses from among you, and Allah loves not the wrong-doers." (The Holy Qur’an, ۳: (۱۴۰

The Holy Qur’an emphasises upon its followers not to worry or be slow because victory eventually belongs to believers. If believers have received blows, similar blows .were also dealt to the enemy

The third method consists of narratives of the predecessors and their role against optional tragedies. The Holy Qur’an, puts

the patience and steadfastness of the supporters of prophets and pioneers of Islam :in the following language

And how many a prophet had fought with whom were a number of devoted men and" they lost not heart at what befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor did they demean themselves (before their enemies); Allah loves the steadfast." (The (Holy Qur’an, ٣: ١۴۶

There are many such verses in the Holy Qur’an describing similar situations, and encouraging believers to tread the path of Prophets. Of course, patience against such optional tragedies, while it is quite difficult and requires strong determination and faith, but at the same time, in itself plays a miraculous role in producing firm resolve and righteous faith; and more important than that is responsible for creation of the .ideal society of Islam

It is for this reason that many verses of the Holy Qur’an as well as of narrations of the infallible Imams, emphasise in different styles the importance of this branch of patience, and have issued the necessary guidelines and instructions about its practice. Since this discussion which is mostly based upon narratives, therefore let us :quote one more narration about patience against all kinds of tragedies as follows

Abi Basir quotes from Imam Ja'fer Sadiq (a.s.): "A free person is free in all situations," if a terrible tragedy befalls him he is patient, and tragedies and inflictions cannot break him. He might be arrested, chained and tyrannised but converts hardships into comfort like Prophet Joseph

the righteous, whose freedom was the least affected by oppression, tyranny and imprisonment."(1)

Chapter 6: The Advantages and Effects of Patience

point

In the end, it would be necessary to mention about the advantages and constructive effects of patience. Although in our earlier discussions, the topic has been covered to a certain extent, but in order to provide more detailed information regarding the individual and social effects of patience, further discussion is necessary.

It should be mentioned that, here we are not looking into the advantages of patience in the next world, i.e. the rewards which will be awarded in the Hereafter to a person for being patient in this life. But at the same time, it should not be forgotten that those rewards cannot be separated with some of the advantages of patience in the life of this world.

At present, however, we are looking into rewards and advantages of patience for a patient person, or a society and groups of patients, as a ready cash, on account of their being steadfast and patient, right here at this stage of worldly life. It is really difficult to start and to select a certain advantage out of unlimited advantages of patience.

One could say in nutshell, that everything, this world as well as the next world; the higher noble human ideals as well as the lowest mischievous plots, and in summary, each goal or aim, desired by any one, are all directly tied to their being steadfast and patient. If it is required to produce a logical reasoning to support the

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1- al-Kafi vol. ۲ p. ۸۹

above statement, and if the vast experiences gained by mankind throughout history are not sufficient enough for convincing, then let us present this definite and explicit :formula

Accomplishment of a goal requires action, and action requires patience and .endurance

Everyone must have, at least a couple of times in his lifespan, examined the .correctness of the above formula

Permanence and Victory

The Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) in the following quotation, which is full :of wisdom said

A steadfast patient person would never be denied success, however it may" (materialise after a long time."(١

In another quotation from him, the same theme has been described in other words as :follows

Whoever mounts the horse of patience would definitely find his path to the field of" (victory."(٢

During the battle of Siffin, in an inspiring sermon for boosting the morale of his forces, :the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) said

Make your supports upon righteousness and patience (stability); because it is only" (after patience (stability) that victory shall be bestowed upon you."(٣

Is it really true, that patience and endurance will enable a person to achieve his goal? If this is a overall law or regulation, which is always applicable, then why all along the history, we encounter many groups, who in spite of their best efforts at endurance and steadfastness could not accomplish their desired goals, and could not witness the victory. During the early period of Islam, there are incidents like Ashura, the uprising of the 'Tawwabin' (۴), of Zaid bin Ali (۵), and similar incidents during

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Nahj-ul-Balagha -١

Nahj-ul-Balagha -٢

Tarikh Kamil ibn Athir -٣

Tawwabin or penitents, as they are called in history books, were mostly people of -۴ Kufa and Iraq, who rose up against the Omayyad rule in ۶۴ A.H. (۶٨٣ AD.), three years after the tragedy of Karbala to avenge the blood of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and the Prophet's Household. Led by the Prophet's ageing companion Sulayman ibn gurad al-Khazaei, who was one of the leading Islamic generals in the conquest of Transoxiana, their sole aim in battle, was either to kill the ungodly Omayyads or to achieve martyrdom in the process. For almost two years, they fought the caliphal forces, killing a great number of those troops who had fought against Imam Husayn (a.s.) at (Karbala.(Ed

Zaid was the son of the fourth Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (the survivor of Karbala). Fed -۵ up with Omayyad tyranny, he started an uprising in Iraq and was tragically martyred and his body was burned by the caliphal forces in ١٢۴ A.H. (٧۴٠ AD.). His movement like other Alid uprisings, aroused people's conscience against the libertine and ungodly rule of the Omayyads, who were swept into the dustbin of history ten years later in (١٣٢ A.H. (٧۴٩ AD.). (Ed

.later periods

Of course many people are interested to know the answer to the above questions, but if we ponder a little bit, the answer will become explicitly clear. In our opinion, those who consider these historical apparently unsuccessful and inconclusive events, such as Ashura, and martyrdom of Hazrat Zaid, as a violation of the overall law (after patience comes victory), have not recognised the aims and objects, which were incorporated in each of these incidents, and whose attainment meant achieving success and victory for these movements. Now let us ask this question: What were the aims of these historical events? If this question could be answered correctly, it would become quite apparent that under no circumstances they were defeated or .disappointed in their endeavours and efforts toward achieving the cherished goals

Incidentally, it should be reminded, that aims and objectives, as regards to being long term or short term, differ from each other. Some of the aims could be accomplished in short time, while some others could only be materialised after a lengthy period. To plant a sapling, nurture it and make all other necessary arrangements, are preliminary requirements, in order to utilise the fruits of that tree. If all these preliminary requirements were, without the least negligence, fulfilled timely, and if precautions were taken to make it resist the negative factors responsible for unproductiveness and decay, certainly this plant will bear fruits, but a uniform and .fixed period for all places does not exist

Sometimes the fruits under consideration will be

obtained, say after a period of one year. But occasionally the type of the tree, the fruits under consideration, and the natural circumstances are such that one cannot hope to have fruits at least before ١٠ years. Certainly, the ultimate goal for taking care of this sapling, which will be achieved after ١٠ years, is to have the desired fruits of this .tree

But during all these long waiting years, the aim behind each year's efforts is to move the sapling one step closer to the date when it will bear fruits. After passing of each progressive year, the gardener becomes happy and satisfied, that his efforts during the past years have produced results i.e. the sapling has grown through one stage, .getting on a year closer to its fruit-bearing date

Now, if an observer, aware of the efforts and endeavours of this hardworking and patient gardener all along the year, does not see any fruits on the tree after passing of a year, and wrings his hands in hopelessness and looses his confidence in the famous notion: "It is only after patience, victory would have a chance," and out of immaturity and inexperience were to criticise the gardener, then such an observer would obviously be termed a narrow minded and impatient person by everyone and would be reminded that he should not expect that the efforts and endeavours of one .year will produce a result equivalent to ١٠ years of efforts

The movement of Ashura, and all other later movements having the

same orientation and same direction, without exception succeeded in achieving their desired aims and goals. Each of these movements were giant strides for the destruction of power of tyrants ruling in the name of Islam, and for the establishment .of ideal Islamic society

Without any doubt following these pioneering giant steps, if the courage of later generations would have encouraged them, to take the next steps, the ultimate result would have been certainly achieved. Therefore, to expect that ultimate result, which could only be obtained through the organised and continuous efforts and involvement of a few generations, or few persons, or some people of a single Generation, is .certainly wrong, resulting from ignorance and over-expectation

In the above example, it should be said to that impatient and inexperienced observer, that those who had accepted the hardships of gardening and discharged their duties understood well that the work done by them, each day and each hour, had instantaneously produced desired results, even before the passing of that hour and day, and they achieved the result of their patience practised at each passing instant. Two years of hard work of this gardener brings the fruit-bearing date closer to two years. If his efforts were not there, the fruits of this sapling would have been delayed by two years or perhaps two years of fruit-bearing time would have been wasted. Is ?reality other than this

Parallel to this reality, there exists another reality too. If, after an obstacle which prevented the sincere gardener from continuing his

job, another gardener does not pursue the duties of his predecessor, by undertaking the planned activities for the third, fourth years, obviously this tree will never bear .fruits

Let us consider the example of a certain load, supposed to be carried to a place, say ten steps ahead. Now, suppose it has moved by two steps, one could say the load has reached close to its final destination by two steps. If the first person, responsible for its delivery, is in a position to undertake the remaining steps, he would do so, if not his substitute will take the remaining steps to carry the load to its final destination. But if this responsibility, i.e. moving the load past the remaining eight steps was not discharged by the first person or by his substitute, then obviously the load will never be delivered to its final destination. However, there is no doubt, that the result of patience in taking the first two pioneering steps has been achieved, because the load .has moved by two steps

To uproot a deep rooted tree, and to remove a huge rock without having proper equipment like drill, chain saw, nr powerful and strong hands, is of course not possible, but having all of them, but not having patience will not produce any result. If the first person having strong hands and patience, after making a headway was forced to discontinue his efforts, then the others who were supposed to take his place, are responsible to carry on the

.job by one more step ahead, and another stage closer to success

Likewise, the uprising of Zaid bin Ali, because of an unexpected tragedy -- an arrow struck him on his forehead and he fell down instantly -- could not accomplish the final victory, but the result of this pioneering step (i.e. to arise) was achieved immediately by him. His uprising was a heavy blow to the huge rock of the usurper Omayyad .regime

A heavy rock, which required repeated and continuous blows, to be destroyed completely. If the initial blows would have been accompanied by later blows, this black boulder of Omayyad rule, which was a heavy burden upon the Islamic Ummah, and a source of oppression, would have splintered into pieces. Certainly, without the initial severe blow being struck, the later blows would not have achieved that desired .result, or may be, no one would have dared to strike those later blows

There are narrations - refer to Bihar-ul-Anwar - which consider the martyrdom of the Lord of Martyrs, Imam Husayn (a.s.), as the key factor for the collapse of Sufyani rule .(and the martyrdom of Zaid bin Ali for the downfall of the Marwanids(۱

Psychological Traces of Patience in the Lives of individuals

Apart from the constructive social advantages of patience such as gaining victory and fulfilment of aims and goals, this characteristic is also responsible for the positive and .very important influences upon the mentality and spirit of the patient person

It is because of this miraculous awareness, that most of the historical human sacrifices, and specially the supreme

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The Omayyuds who usurped power of the Islamic State in ۴۱ A.H., when Muawiya -۱ the son of Abu Sufyan, forced Imam Hassan (a.s.) to abdicate, were divided into two branches; the Sufyanids whose rule terminated with the death of Muawiya ibn Yazid in ۶۴ A.H. (۶۸۳ AD.) and the Marwanids, whose rule started with Marwan ibn Hakam and ended with Marwan ibn Muhammad al-Hemar in ۱۳۲ A.H. (۷۴۹ AD.), when a new

(dynasty the Abbasids usurped power. (Ed

sacrifices of the martyrs of Karbala, i.e. the companions and relatives of the Lord of Martyrs "Imam Husayn (a.s.)", whose memories we are celebrating during these .nights(۱) will become easy to comprehend

What we mean with the spiritual mentality, are the influences left by the patient person upon his soul and mind, that before accomplishing the external and definite .results of his struggle, he instantaneously obtains the personal result

The Birth of Invincible Spirit

The foremost positive and constructive effect of patience is to produce a strong and invincible personality. Like a good physical exercise programme makes a person strong and healthy to enable him to offer better physical resistance. Secondly, it produces all the required elements for achieving success in accomplishment of aims, .fulfilment of desires, be material or ideological, among the patient individuals

The defeats and failures suffered during the social, religious, and ideological struggle has had a devastative moral effect, a blow, inflicted by the vincible and week mentality upon the determination to carry on the struggle, whose damage and devastation is many times severe than the losses inflicted by trained professional .armed forces and their armament

The soldier(۲), who decided to run away from the battlefield turning his back to the enemy has indeed first suffered a moral defeat, before giving up his physical strength. Until this psychological defeat is not inflicted upon him, it is impossible that a soldier .will be able to turn his back and run away from the battlefield

The historic behaviour of Tariq bin Ziyad -The commander of the Muslim

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۱- These speeches were delivered during Muharram of ۱۳۹۴ Hijri at Masjid-e-Karamat in Mashhad. (Tr.)

۲- General George C. Marshall, a great soldier had stated that "you can have all the material in the world, but without morale it is largely ineffective". He also said: "it is

not enough to fight, it is the spirit which we bring to the fight which decides the issue.
(.It is morale that wins the victory." (Tr

army -- the brave Muslim commander and victor of a portion of Spain in the year ۹۴ Hijri (۷۱۱ AD.), who after crossing the Mediterranean Sea and stepping upon enemy land, ordered the burning of all his ships, is an example of this invincible spirit. The .prime quality of patience is to produce such an invincible spirit in a patient person

Those individuals, who while facing routine events of day-to-day life, such as financial losses, sickness, frustration, hatred, and death etc., do not offer resistance and endurance, and very soon become dejected, aggrieved, annoyed, and helpless, when confronted with obstacles in their path, and thereby leave the scene of struggle and are suspectable to instant defeat. Contrary to these individuals of weak mentality there are those, who in confronting every event in their life use patience as their ultimate winning weapon, and offer resistance in the best possible manner, achieving .an invincible morale and strong will power to face the problems of life

An impatient person could be compared to a soldier in the battlefield who is fighting virtually naked without armour. Such an ill-equipped soldier is most likely to be killed and disappear from the scene during the very first encounter. With the same analogy a patient person could be compared to a soldier who is clad in a coat of mail from head to toes, and is fully equipped with all the required armaments. Obviously to .defeat such a well-equipped soldier by the enemy is relatively a difficult task

,The one

who would never be defeated in the battlefield of life, is the one who had already made all the necessary arrangements, by putting on the armour of patience. Such a person, never gets defeated easily, and when faced with problems and unpleasant events, which abound at every step on the road of perfection and prosperity, never flinches his eyebrows, and his legs and heart remain firm and stable without showing .the least signs of trembling

The following narration from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) throws ample light about the depth of :this divinely inspired Islamic characteristic

Anyone who has not prepared for himself logistics of patience to meet every tragedy" (will find himself in a state of despair and helplessness"(١)

It means that the one who has not planned in advance, how to face the problems and unexpected tragedies of life, and has not developed within himself a spirit of resistance, would soon find himself in a state of despair and helplessness. The opposite of this is, if someone for confrontation with tragedies has equipped himself .with the logistics of patience shall never face disappointment and defeat

The secret of steadfastness and permanence of great builders of the history of mankind, and the foremost amongst them, the divine Prophets and other pious statesmen, who in spite of being inflicted with the most severe pains and tortures at the very beginning of their invitation, remained relatively active and stable, lies in the .same point

With an accurate foresight regarding the bitterness and unpleasantness of this path, and

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١- Tuhaf-al-Aqool

with their properly being equipped with the logistics of patience, they were able to completely eliminate the possibilities of their psychological defeat and with the result .converted themselves into robust and invincible creatures

Their opponents and enemies that in many instances were equipped with all kinds of resources became tired and helpless, but these great men in spite of being deprived .of proper resources diligently continued their heroic invincible resistance

Mutawakkil (١) the Abbasid caliph once said: "Ibn al-Ridha' (٢) has put me in a state of ".perplexion

How someone like Imam Hadi (٣) (a.s.), who has spent most of the period of his leadership under the intense pressure of the ruling regime of caliph Mutawakkil, was in a position to put the powerful caliph in a state of annoyance. When one among the two combatant adversaries is weak as regards to the outwardly resources, but in spite of being faced with imprisonment, deprivations, being away from the comfortable and secured environment, does not get harassed, pressures and hardships does not break his iron will, and in spite of all these obstacles on the path of his cherished goals, continues his long term march. It is obvious that his adversary who, in spite of having equipped with better material resources lacks the commitment .and strong spiritual faith and therefore becomes easily harassed and defeated

Certainly, an impatient wayfarer cannot without first getting himself tired, at the same time, would be able to make his adversary tired undoubtedly he is going to loose and be

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Mutawakkil is one of the Abbasid caliphs who was specially hostile to the Ahl-ul-Bait -١ (.and their followers, ruled from ٢٣٢/٨٤٧ to ٢٤٧/٨٦١ (Tr

After Imam al-Ridha' (a.s.) the ٨th Imam, three successive Imams till the ١١th Imam -٢ and some other prominent descendants of the ٨th Imam, during that period were called "Ibn al-Ridha'". In the above sentence the reference is to Imam Hadi (a.s.) the ١٠th Imam

٣ - The important point in this narration is the importance of predicting dangers in advance, while making preparations for struggle. Perhaps, those who without considering the potential dangers, conducted a dangerous operation, do not have the strength to confront the danger and therefore as soon as they face the signs of potential danger, became disappointed, ashamed and helpless.

defeated. This is the strange characteristic of patience which makes a person .invincible

Appearance of Righteous Virtues Within

The people before testing, cannot evaluate themselves, and very often are unaware about the hidden energy in their existence. Let us consider the example of a strong person, who is possessed with plenty of natural physical strength without doing any special practice or physical exercise. Let us imagine that he has never participated in a weight lifting or any other physical competition, such a person is certainly not aware regarding the amount of physical strength in his body. We could only discover the Allah-given energy in our existence, when we are challenged to participate in a .certain competition which requires the utilisation of that particular energy

The second important effect of patience is, that a patient person after offering resistance in different fields of life and against the events and obstacles, discovers about the amount of energy, its particulars, and the noble and higher sublime virtues hidden within his existence, which were never discovered by him earlier, during a .routine life without any headache

Those who have suffered the pressures and harshness of life, and for the sake of their cherished noble aims and ideals, were subjected to severe tragedies and hardships appreciate the above meanings. Such individuals with an irreversible decree of determination, in their confrontation with great dangers, and severe pressures, while a strange naive observer would have considered them defeated and destroyed completely, because of their patience and endurance, were able to achieve a sense of relief

and victory, an unprecedented power and surprising grandeur; within their existence, which was something completely new for them and was never realised by them .before

Therefore, it is because of patience, that a patient person could better recognise his self, as well as could better identify the positive points within his existence, and could .discover the energy which was never identified throughout his life before

More Attention and Reliance upon Allah

The third constructive quality of patience is that whatever stage or extent a patient person may be, it helps him to bring relatively closer and more reliant upon Allah. Now, some people may consider that reliance upon Allah does not get along with the reliance upon self, and therefore according to their logic, anyone who is dependent .upon Allah, could not rely upon his self

When it is said: 'Rely upon Allah', such people complain: Let people rely upon themselves, and let their eyes and hopes look towards themselves, as if the one who invites the people to rely upon Allah, wants them not to be relied upon themselves. While in reality for a person committed to Allah, reliance upon self is complimentary and inseparable with each other, even to the extent that reliance upon self is regarded as one of the parameter of the patience, which in effect is a means for reliance upon Allah as well as. Because impatience against bitter tragedies of life, and fear against optional calamities, which are reflections of lack of self-reliance, also .means forgetting Allah

When a person is inflicted with the

severe tragedies of life, and the millstone representing the testing of life is grinding him with intense pressure, if he does not become impatient, aggrieved, and annoyed, the channels of his communication with Allah would become wider and independent, .and his heart and soul would be enlightened with the Light of Allah

And on the contrary, his becoming weak and annoyed, makes him ignorant, stranger .and disconnected from his own self as well as from Allah

This sentence speaks about a reality fully explicit with clear reasoning and tested with the experience of those, who in their confrontation with the adverse conditions were able to utilise patience as their winning weapon, and believe and acknowledge this .matter with certainty

Our Lord! Bestow on us endurance, make our foothold sure and give us help against" (the disbelieving folk." (The Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۵۰

p: ۸۲

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

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(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

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spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

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mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

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